DAMNING CLARENCE THOMAS — *JEFFREY ROSEN*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

DECEMBER 19, 1994 • $2.95

Los Angeles 90049

AMBASSADOR UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

DEC 0 6 1994

PO Box 111
Big Sandy, TX 75755

DOUGLAS COUPLAND

visits the neighborhood where

Marilyn Monroe killed herself

wn Simpson died

#BXBKDML ******* 3-DIGIT 757
#75755AB411RY007# 013095
HO NWRE S00305
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
ROY HAMMER LIB
PO BOX 111
BIG SANDY TX 75755-0111

0 787445 1

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED.

ADAMS

CHAMBER SYMPHONY

Grand Pianola Music

Speeding limos, churning engines, and the Roadrunner are just some of the images evoked by two pieces "written with flair and brilliance" (London Times) by this Grammy-winning composer.

ANDRIESSEN

DE STIJL

M is for Man, Music, Mozart

"A gigantic boogie-woogie fantasy" (Financial Times) painted in bold strokes of instrumental color, irony, and humor, joins music for a Peter Greenaway collaboration.

GÓRECKI

MISERERE

"Serenely beautiful and deeply moving...breathes a spirit of fervant supplication" (Chicago Tribune). Four haunting works for 250-voice choir from the composer whose Third Symphony became a phenomenon throughout the world.

KRONOS

NIGHT PRAYERS

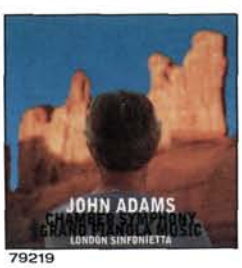
From the Throat Singers of Tuva to Giya Kancheli, the Soviet Republics give voice to Kronos' latest collection — eerily beautiful songs and laments joining traditional musics with classical composition — "the most eloquent recording of their career" (Boston Phoenix)

REICH

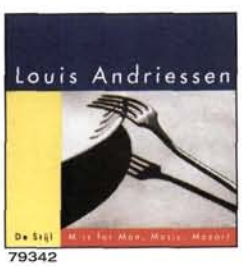
TEHILLIM

Three Movements

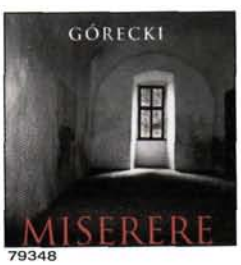
"An infectious, high-spirited laudation", (TIME) Tehillim means "praises", and is 30 minutes of vocal and percussive energy played by the virtuosic Schoenberg Ensemble, paired on this new recording with a world-premiere for orchestra featuring the London Symphony with Michael Tilson-Thomas.



79219



79342



79348

79346

79295

NEW MUSIC FROM ELEKTRA NONESUCH

For credit card orders call 1-800-490-5465 ext. 4450

©1994 Elektra Entertainment, a division of Warner Communications Inc. a Time Warner Company.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

DECEMBER 19, 1994

FOUNDED 1914
WASHINGTON, D.C.
ISSUE 4,170

AMBASSADOR UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

Los Angeles
90049

PO Box 111
Big Sandy, TX 75755

Editor-in-Chief and Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ

Editor
ANDREW SULLIVAN

Literary Editor
LEON WIESELTIER

Executive Editor
DAVID SHIPLEY

Senior Editors
FRED BARNES, ANN HULBERT, MICKEY KAUS, MICHAEL KINSLEY, WESTON KOSOVA, CHARLES LANE, MICHAEL LEWIS, ROBERT WRIGHT

Managing Editor
DAVID GREENBERG

Films
STANLEY KAUFFMANN

Theater
ROBERT BRUSTEIN

Poetry
MARY JO SALTER

Dance
MINDY ALOFF

Legal Affairs
JEFFREY ROSEN

Art
JED PERL

Contributing Editors
ELIOT A. COHEN, STANLEY CROUCH, ANNA HUSARSKA, JOHN B. JUDIS, CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER, VINT LAWRENCE, LOUIS MENAND, ROGER ROSENBLATT, MAGGIE SCARF, ROBERT SHAPIRO, RONALD STEEL, E.V. THAW, TOM TOLES, TATYANA TOLSTAYA, MICHAEL WALZER, JACOB WEISBERG, C. VANN WOODWARD

Associate Editor
RUTH SHALIT

Assistant Literary Editor
NADER MOUSAVIZADEH

Assistant Editor
AMY KNOX SHEFFER

Design Consultant
ERIC BAKER

Editorial-Corporate Coordinator
LAURA E. OBOLENSKY

Production Director
BRUCE STEINKE

Production Assistant
HENRY RIGGS

Copy Editor
DEBRA DUROCHER

Staff Writer
HANNA ROSIN

Reporter-Researchers
JENNIFER BRADLEY, ANDY LAMEY, DANTE RAMOS

President
JEFFREY L. DEARTH

Publisher
JOAN M. STAPLETON

Associate Publisher-Marketing
PAUL J. VIZZA

Associate Publisher-Circulation
PEGGY JARVIS FERRIN

Associate Publisher-Advertising
JAMES J. McCABE

Controller
JEAN GANDY

Advertising Director
JENNIFER BARRETT

Accounting Manager
CHRISTINA R. BONIFER

Circulation Manager
CECELIA M. STEPHENS

Advertising Assistant
DIANE M. SEBOLD

Accounting Assistant
JACQUELYN M. PASCALE

New York Coordinator
SUZANNE McENTEE

Circulation Assistant
CAROLYN BERRY

Back Issues and Reception
DORIS RIDLEY

Cover by Eric Baker for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Article on page 18.

4 **CORRESPONDENCE** Torching the Senate, tweaking Pete Wilson, Ottomans &c.

6 **ROBERT WRIGHT** TRB: THE GAY DIVORCÉ Newt Gingrich's true family values.

7 **THE EDITORS** "A CIVIL WAR" Clinton's latest Balkan cave-in.

8 **NOTEBOOK** A Saudi Arabian Khomeini, a Ford Foundation grant &c.

9 **JONATHAN RAUCH** COLOR TV Race and gender nuttery hits the FCC.

12 **CHARLES LANE** PICKED POCKET The strange story of what really led to the siege of Bihać: the twisted motives and actions of Serb and Muslim alike.

14 **JOHN B. JUDIS** FROM HELL The conventional wisdom, including this magazine's, is that Clinton needs to return to his conservative, Democratic Leadership Council roots to rescue his presidency. Wrong.

18 **DOUGLAS COUPLAND** LOS ANGELES 90049 In Brentwood, California—the neighborhood that gave us the deaths of Marilyn Monroe and Nicole Brown Simpson—Hollywood meets suburbia. One day earlier this year, our reporter wandered the streets and parkways. A journal of what he found.

26 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ON FILMS: FRENCH CONNECTIONS Heavy-breathing *Queen Margot*.

27 **JEFFREY ROSEN** CONFIRMATIONS The dirt on Thomas, Hill and everybody else.

34 **HELEN VENDLER** THE RESTORER OF THE REAL *The Varieties of Metaphysical Poetry* by T. S. Eliot

36 **ERIC MATHERN** POEM *Servants' Day Off*

38 **NATHAN GLAZER** UNSENTIMENTAL EDUCATION *City on a Hill* by James Traub

42 **CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER** WASHINGTON DIARIST: PLAY IT AGAIN, CHRIS

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 211, Number 25, Issue 4,170, December 19, 1994. (Printed in the U.S. on November 30, 1994.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 10 & 17, July 18 & 25, Aug. 22 & 29, and Sept. 19 & 26, 1994) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. The New Republic Advertising Sales Office (212) 702-4882. Yearly subscriptions, $69.97; foreign, $99.97; Canada, $84.97. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage & handling). © 1994 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest, Microform, CD-ROM, issue and article copies are available through University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone 1-800-521-0600. Internet mail address: editors@tnr.com Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 602, Mount Morris, IL 61054. For subscription problems call 800-827-1289.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Immoral majority

To the editors:

There are several flaws in Tom Geoghegan's article "The Infernal Senate" (November 21), beginning with the assertion that the Founders wanted majority rule. The Federalist Papers reveal that the greatest fear of the Founders was the oppression of the minority by the majority. The Founders established a complicated system of checks and balances precisely because they did not want an easy and efficient translation of majority will into government policy. Geoghegan's point that at the time of the founding, the country was smaller, and so a minority represented a larger percent of the population, is misguided. There are numerous references throughout the Federalist Papers to the expectation that the size of the country would grow; it was for this reason that the Founders established a republic rather than a democracy based on "one person, one vote." To the Founders, oppressing 10 percent of the population was no better or worse than oppressing 33 percent of the population.

Geoghegan laments that when the Democrats held majority control of the Senate (as well as the House and the presidency) it could not enact desired legislation. He forgets about the Great Society period when a Democratic president and the Senate, over the objections of a small minority, passed vital and essential legislation through a combination of public opinion and clever coalition-building in the Senate. Senators from large urban states no longer have much to offer their small rural state colleagues in return for supporting policies that do not benefit small-state constituents.

Now we have a situation where the Republicans claim to represent the majority will in this country. Would Geoghegan support a dilution of minority strength in the Senate today—post November 8, 1994? Democrats cannot forget that the very rules that enabled Alan Simpson to block health care reform will enable Ted Kennedy to block prayer in school. Which is exactly as James Madison thought it should be.

WENDY J. SCHILLER
Providence, Rhode Island

To the editors:

Tom Geoghegan posits an interesting issue concerning the disproportionate allocation of power within the U.S. Senate. However, there are only twenty-four states west of the Mississippi River, not thirty, and at least two-thirds of those states have traditionally had Democratic representation in the Senate. From this, one could hardly conclude then that the senators from those states are all "small-state whites in pickup trucks with gun racks, shooting down" health insurance and aid to the inner city.

MICHAEL S. HALL
Cincinnati, Ohio

To the editors:

Tom Geoghegan urges that the Constitution be amended so that states with the smallest populations would be forced to have only one senator. As it happens, however, such an amendment is constitutionally impossible, for, according to Article V, the process of amending the Constitution is bound by one substantive restriction: "no state, without its Consent, shall be deprived of its equal Suffrage in the Senate."

STEVEN M. CAHN
New York, New York

To the editors:

Do the small states really contribute nothing to the rest of the country? Only if you ignore that places like Alaska contain most of the natural resources that build the American Dream in places like New Jersey. (How much oil and timber are produced in Trenton?) Tom Geoghegan is upset because he believes that small-state senators should not have so much influence in urban issues, never mind that he wants people in Manhattan to have more say about Montana mineral rights than Montanans.

Geoghegan asks why the growing minorities in the cities should continue to be held hostage by the filibustering white Republican senators from the small states. Such a question ignores the reality that many small-state Democratic senators such as Bob Kerrey of Nebraska, Tom Harkin of Iowa and Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico have worked hard to push the Clinton social agenda through Congress, only to have it stymied by big-state Republicans such as New York's Al D'Amato, Texas's Phil Gramm and Pennsylvania's Arlen Specter.

The Great Compromise of the 1787 Constitutional Convention gave each state equal suffrage in the Senate and provided a backbone for American government. Without it, the small states never would have agreed to be governed by the Constitution and probably would not have joined the Union. The Senate still protects small-state citizens from populists like Geoghegan who would use the strength of the majority faction to ride roughshod over small-state interests.

MARTIN SNYDER
Chicago, Illinois

To the editors:

Tom Geoghegan is right to despair of the possibility of fundamental reform of the structure of American government. But he overlooks a partial solution. Current Senate rules regarding filibusters make them 9-to-5 affairs, allowing Bob Dole-types to obstruct legislation by day, attend lavish fund-raising events in the evening and still get a decent night's sleep. In the 1960s, by contrast, filibusters involved considerable personal sacrifice. Because rules required senators to debate continuously, senators would have to take turns doing the night shift, reading from phone books at 3 a.m. to pass the time.

The Democrats should propose changes in Senate rules once again making filibusters more difficult. How could Republicans oppose rules changes smoothing the path for their alleged reform agenda? Since the Republicans will most likely fall victim to anti-incumbent wrath in 1996, the Democrats would stand to benefit. Regardless of future electoral prospects, however, the Democrats should push for such changes in the interest of better government, which, admittedly, is always a weak argument for reform.

JEFF SEITZER
Chicago, Illinois

Tom Geoghegan replies:

Wendy J. Schiller begs the question. Did Madison, et al., want a Senate based on equal state representation? No. Read the Convention debates. Madison, James Wilson, all our heroes, vehemently denounced the lack of one person, one vote for the Senate. What upset them was not majority rule per se but the concentration of *all* power in a single body, like the British House of Commons. They wanted checks and balances *and* majority rule. As to the other letters: my basic facts are that small states, representing 10 percent of the people, can block any bill. As to my anecdote about first seeing a map of the West and counting, I'm sorry: I must have been adding in Alberta. And can we legally change the Senate system of "equal state suffrage?" Of course. The American people, not the states, are sovereign. The Constitution says, "We the People ..." not "We the States...."

Half-baked

To the editors:

I am appalled by Fouad Ajami's piece "In Europe's Shadows" (November 21). Such unchallenged demagoguery has led many to develop half-baked analyses with regard to the current Bosnian civil war. Ajami points out that some Serbs were willing surrogates of Ottoman

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Turkey. He fails to acknowledge that as brutally occupied peoples, the Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians, Armenians and Arabs viewed the Ottoman Turkish legacy with scorn. Turkey's treatment of Jews was Machiavellian in that the Sultans realized that as a talented but persecuted minority in other lands, the Jews would be loyal and useful surrogates as long as they were treated respectfully.

Ajami mentions the Croat Ustashe past without mentioning the Bosnian Muslim Handzjar unit of the S.S. If proportionately speaking more Bosnian Muslims died than Serbs during World War II, it was primarily because of war-related casualties independent of the genocide suffered by Gypsies, Jews and Serbs. This view was acknowledged at the Nuremberg Trials and is acknowledged by the Wiesenthal Center.

MICHAEL AVERKO
Malverne Park, New York

To the editors:

It was only a matter of time before a new wave of books would emerge on Bosnia, poring over minutiae from that region's distant past in an attempt to "explain" the current war there. Sure to follow were those like Fouad Ajami who would further torture those readings to extract some raison d'être for today's nominally independent Bosnia-Herzegovina.

As much as Ajami may strive to conjure up a distinctly Bosnian people, there is no such thing. Bosnia's and Herzegovina's Serbs and Croats by and large see themselves as ethnic extensions of kinsmen in neighboring regions. Only Bosnia's and Herzegovina's Muslims, disembodied after the retreat of the Ottomans who spawned their culture, came to identify themselves as exclusively "Bosnian" or "Herzegovinian."

The campaign to depict Bosnia-Herzegovina as a cohesive nation is disingenuous. It attempts to cast that region's ethnic groups as one people without acknowledging that they are also all essentially the same as people in Belgrade, Zagreb and elsewhere—Serbo-Croat-speaking South Slavs. Which is why Yugoslavia, for all of its travails, made so much sense.

DAN NJEGOMIR
Colorado Springs, Colorado

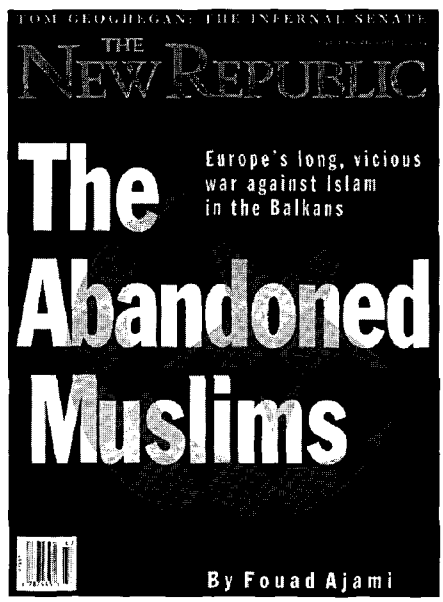
Propped up

To the editors:

Now that 59 percent of California's voters approved Proposition 187, that debate over providing benefits to illegal immigrants will occur in the courts; I hope the courts will demonstrate more *insight than you* did ("Don't Panic" by The Editors, November 21).

One provision of Proposition 187 would exclude illegal immigrants from public schools. Opponents said that this provision would be unconstitutional because the U.S. Supreme Court's 1982 opinion in *Plyler* v. *Doe* held that illegal immigrants couldn't be denied a public education by the state of Texas. However, the *Plyler* decision held that the exclusion would be constitutional if it furthered "some substantial state interest"; that "the record in no way supports the claim that exclusion of undocumented children is likely to improve the overall quality of education in the state"; and that the record did not support "the claim that the educational resources of the state are so direly limited" that the exclusion was a reasonable solution.

Given California's budget deficit, the underfunding of its schools, underpayment of teachers and the $1 billion-plus annual cost of educating illegal immigrants, it's clear that California will be able to make the showing that Texas could not. Besides, *Plyler* was a 5-4 decision by a Court much more liberal than today's. Only one of the majority's members, Justice John Paul Stevens, (along with two of the dissenters, Justices William Rehnquist and Sandra Day O'Connor) remains on the Court.


TOM GEOGHEGAN: THE INFERNAL SENATE
THE NEW REPUBLIC
Europe's long, vicious war against Islam in the Balkans
The Abandoned Muslims
By Fouad Ajami

Finally, the *Plyler* opinion did not involve medical benefits, only public education.

ALLAN J. FAVISH
Tarzana, California

To the editors:

California Governor Pete Wilson doesn't really want to implement Proposition 187. Nor do its opponents. Nor do those Californians who were persuaded in the final weeks of the campaign that a vote for Prop 187 was not a solution to illegal immigration but a way to send a message. Wilson sowed the seeds of Prop 187 more than a year ago; now he must be prepared to reap its harvest. Blocking or stalling the implementation of Prop 187, even if it is the right and most responsible action, is a political mistake, since it will merely relieve Wilson of the responsibility of coping with the economic, safety and public health consequences of this initiative. This is exactly what Wilson wants, and what many Californians apparently intended with their "yes" votes. At the same time, stopping Prop 187 will allow Wilson to continue bashing illegal immigrants, perhaps all the way to the White House. Wilson shouldn't be able to have it both ways. It's time for the governor and the advocates of Prop 187 to pay the piper. Put conscience, compassion and common sense aside and let them pay.

MARK P. PETRACCA
Irvine, California

Go ask Alice

To the editors:

At least one sentence in Mickey Kaus's recent TRB column ("Alice in chains," TRB, November 14) is manifestly untrue: "The cost of balancing the budget by 2002 is about $1 trillion even without the tax cuts."

The Congressional Budget Office projects Federal revenue to be $1.9 trillion in 2002. Putting Social Security aside, this means that if growth in federal spending is held to 3 percent the budget will be in balance. Maybe Kaus was talking about "Washington cuts," where a projected increase is partly reduced.

PAUL MICHEL LION
McLean, Virginia

And another thing

[Editors' note: the following paragraph from a letter published in the November 28 issue was inadvertently omitted.]

I have not read the Herrnstein and Murray book. I have heard the beginnings of what may be cogent criticisms of it. Although many of the points in the article seem to be worth making (and perhaps worth rebutting), some seem ill-considered. But none of whatever justified criticism may ultimately come to the authors excuses THE NEW REPUBLIC for the gang assault it arranged. Nor can the magazine be excused for the next wave of intolerance it has just encouraged. Only a couple of years ago, THE NEW REPUBLIC professed to be repelled by campus illustrations of the misplaced zealotry the magazine has now practiced.

DONALD L. HOROWITZ
Durham, North Carolina

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRB®

FROM WASHINGTON

The gay divorcé

I sense a disturbing trend in American political discourse: a decline since mid-November in the amount of time people spend dwelling on Newt Gingrich's various forms of hypocrisy. Maybe critics are heeding the counsel of liberal pundits who say that the post-election frenzy of Newt-bashing should give way to cool strategic reflection. "Isn't it time to get past the fulminations and examine why Mr. Gingrich drives his adversaries particularly insane?" asks a columnist in *The New York Times*. Another liberal writes, in *Newsweek*, "Apoplexy chokes reason. Whatever his excesses of intolerance, Gingrich is not the ostrich—the liberals are. Until they recognize that, they'll never get their heads out of the sand."

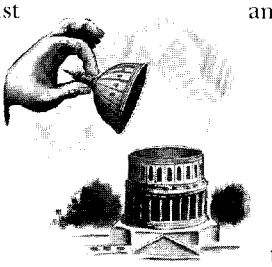
I'm all for figuring out why liberals came out on the wrong end of the November bloodbath. But surely one reason is that conservatives are so good at bludgeoning opponents to death. They have spent the past two years painting President Clinton as an unfit leader on grounds of private morality (Gennifer Flowers, etc.) and professional ethics (Whitewater). Now, as if heaven-sent, comes a Republican leader whose private and professional records stand in contempt of his professed ideology. And Democrats are supposed to just slap him around a little and then retire to the classroom for a seminar on his political genius? That's the sort of nerdy earnestness that got us in the mess we're in today! I say we beat the noxious little butterball to a pulp.

Admittedly, there's a limit to how often we can recite the litany of Gingrich hypocrisy (family values, special interests, Social Security, etc.) before people get bored. But each verse is rich enough to merit exegesis. This week we'll focus on family values.

Just before the election, Gingrich tried to turn Susan Smith's alleged murder of her two kids into a reason to vote Republican. Her crime "vividly reminds every American how sick the society is getting and how much we have to change."

The Susan Smith tragedy is indeed symptomatic. Specifically, it's an extreme example of the social costs of divorce. I don't mean that divorced mothers often kill their kids to land a new husband. I mean that once kids lose their father, bad things can happen: they can go without paternal guidance; they can inherit a stepfather or live-in boyfriend who, because he's not biologically related, may not love them and may even neglect or abuse them; their mother, in seeking a new mate, can sacrifice their welfare (typically in ways more subtle than killing them). The general rule is that once the father leaves, various aspects of human nature work against the interests of the kids. This is the strongest single plank in the case for "family values."

Unfortunately, various aspects of human nature also work against lifelong monogamy. Some of these forces reside in women and some in men, but in the case of Gingrich's much-discussed divorce, the problem seems to have been the man. As readers familiar with my worldview will not be shocked to hear, we are about to enter a one-paragraph (and un-nuanced) digression on evolutionary psychology.



Men are by nature more polygamous than women; they are inclined to seek a series of young—that is, fertile—wives, whether simultaneously, like nineteenth-century Mormons, or sequentially, like Gingrich and (for example) Rush Limbaugh. The polygamous impulse seems to grow stronger when men acquire status or power. Indeed, according to evolutionary theory, the whole reason men seek status and power so ardently is that during evolution these assets led to more sex, and thus more offspring, for males in particular. So it's hardly surprising that, upon attaining power, men would feel an urge to expand their romantic horizons. Gingrich, at any rate, felt the urge.

As of 1978, his wife had labored long and hard on behalf of his mostly fruitless political career. That year, he finally won election to Congress and became a bigshot. Meanwhile, Mrs. Gingrich, who had borne him two children, was at the end of her reproductive years. In dumping her, Gingrich was admirably candid. He admitted, according to an aide, that he wanted a younger woman. The gruesome details are well known: the day after his wife had cancer surgery, Gingrich bounded into her hospital room to discuss the terms of divorce.

If the impulses to which Gingrich surrendered are indeed part of our evolutionary heritage, how are we to go about restoring family values? The anthropological record is not encouraging. Most truly monogamous societies have had no real alternative; they had subsistence economies, so men lacked the wealth to support more than one family. Today we live amid social stratification, including layers of considerable affluence; and the anthropological record shows that, given material abundance, polygamy usually flourishes. Indeed, polygamy is what we find today, albeit in the covert form that Gingrich practices: "serial monogamy."

Only a few monogamous societies have bucked the odds—made lifelong marital commitment standard, even amid affluence. How did they do it? Step one in the family values formula is to make divorce a scandal: to stigmatize men who leave their families. This was the approach in Victorian times and during their aftermath earlier this century. To put the matter in Darwinian terms: Victorianism used one visceral male impulse (the extreme thirst for social status) to combat another one (the thirst for multiple mates); you could slake one thirst or the other, not both.

Thus, in a society with truly robust "family values," a man who traded in his wife for a younger model would stand roughly zero chance of retaining elective office. A night job at a 7-Eleven would be a more realistic aspiration. Apropos of the "sickness" symbolized by Susan Smith, Gingrich said, "People want to change, and the only way you get change is to vote Republican." Actually, the surest known way to get the change he's talking about is to vote against people like him.

Gingrich and his ilk prefer to stigmatize another class of people in the name of family values: young women, especially black ones, who have babies out of wedlock. Yet a woman's desire to have a child may feel just as "natural," and as strong, as Gingrich's seemingly irresistible wanderlust. And her desire won't necessarily vanish just because her milieu offers little hope of enduring male commitment. Humans are designed to make the best of bad situations.

Whether "family values" are worth the various costs of restoring them is a tough question, and I'm not sure of the answer. But if you're going to say yes—if you're going to advocate full-scale war against "moral decay," as Gingrich does—you have to understand that it will in some ways be a war against human nature, and that there will be widespread sacrifice and significant casualties. Casualty No. 1 would be Newt Gingrich's political career. Pity.

ROBERT WRIGHT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

DECEMBER 19, 1994

"A CIVIL WAR"

Last week, in a little town called Bihać, the "collective security" of NATO, the "multilateralism" of the United Nations and the "foreign policy presidency" of Bill Clinton were all exposed for what they are.

NATO's credibility was defeated; but the brandy-sipping circumlocutors in the capitals of Europe also have presided over the defeat of NATO's legitimacy. Since the collapse of the Communist order, the Atlantic alliance has gone begging for a reason for being. Such a reason was to be found in the Balkans. NATO, some of us thought, would stop the killing, or amount to nothing. We now know that it amounts to nothing; or worse, it amounts to an instrument of prevarication and complicity is available to the armed, rampant medievalisms of Europe. NATO used to keep the peace. Now NATO keeps the war. Its secretary-general seems to have been ready to strike the Bosnian Serbs, but the timidity of the British and the perversity of the French were insurmountable. The British and the French are maintaining that in Bihać the Bosnians started it. This is true, but trivial. The Bosnian campaign in the northwestern corner of that former country was, by the standards of the Serbian campaign, only an annoyance, a campaign of hope against hope; and hope lost.

Along the East River, the criminal work of Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić was abetted by other means. Historians will show that the most important allies of the Bosnian Serbs have been the peacekeeping forces of the United Nations. Their strategic role in this conflict has been essentially to act as hostages. They provided the cover that the slaughter needed. After all, NATO will not put the U.N.'s soldiers in danger. This has been the standing alibi for the military inaction of the West, although there are many significant Serbian targets not ornamented by the blue helmets of UNPROFOR; and the alibi works almost every time. The U.N. might as well have deployed women and children. While the U.N.'s apologists insist on a multipolar, pluralistic, thoughtful post-cold war world in which forceful action must be the consequence of a more or less global consensus, the commander of the Bosnian Serbs proposes to reporters that "borders are drawn in blood," and proceeds to *prove the proposition.*

It is the White House, however, that has behaved most contemptibly. The administration had begun to lift the arms embargo against the Bosnians, at least to the extent of no longer enforcing it at sea; but it took only a Serbian challenge to the "safe area" of Bihać to reverse the administration's course. On the autumn morning when Americans awoke to such headlines as "U.S. FAVORS MAKING CONCESSIONS TO SERBS" and "U.S., IN SHIFT, GIVES UP ITS TALK OF TOUGH ACTION AGAINST SERBS," they learned that their country no longer acts as a great power. The president had caved, and he didn't even pretend that he hadn't. His secretary of state was not seen and not heard. His secretary of defense observed coldly a few days earlier that the conquest of Bosnia was irreversible. His chief of staff began to describe the Serbian war of aggression as "a civil war." His national security adviser was on his farm, in the company of his famous cows and his famous conscience.

Oh, we did send an aircraft carrier to the region, but only to help the U.N. troops in the event of an evacuation. It fell to Karadžić to tell the truth about American foreign policy. "The United States sends 2,000 Marines," he said, "then they have to send 10,000 more to save the 2,000. This is the best way to have another Vietnam." The man is cruel, but he is not stupid. He speaks the language that spooks Washington.

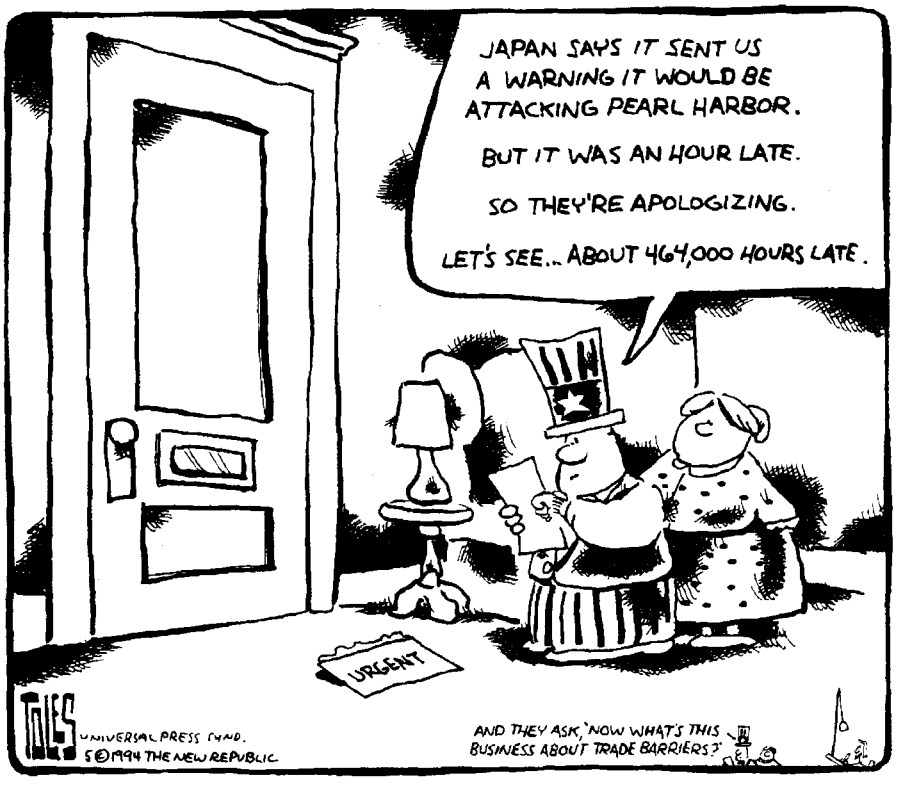
Strategically and militarily, Karadžić is wrong. There was never the danger that Bosnia would turn into Vietnam. The Serbian army is only the Serbian army, and we are the United States. We have the power to stop the Serbian advance, not by landing American forces, but by striking a variety of Serbian positions from the air, and by helping the Bosnians to acquire the strength that they need for their own defense, and by establishing the tone for a proper response to genocide. Politically and psychologically, however, Karadžić is right. We are inhibited, and wavering, and uninterested, and heartless. The poor Bosnians have no political constituency in this country that might attract a political handler's attention. The president is up for politics, but he is not up for history.

The realists will say that Bosnia is only Bosnia, that a quarter of a million people is only a quarter of a million people. What matters about a stain, though, is not its magnitude. What matters is its delibility; and if the conquest of Bosnia really is irreversible, then the stain of Bosnia really is indelible. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTEBOOK

SIC TRANSIT: Mick Jagger became honorary president of the London School of Economics. The Clinton administration said it would offer Bosnia's Serbs political and territorial concessions. Communists came to power in Nepal. California kindergarten student Tyler Palm, 5, was suspended and faced with expulsion after finding a discarded razor blade and bringing it to his school, which has a "zero tolerance" weapons policy. The Justice Department reported that one in four prisoners in federal prisons is not a U.S. citizen. Gary Blanchard of Northampton, Massachusetts, was sentenced to up to twelve years in prison for trying to kill librarian Nancy Brady, whom he beat with a book in "a fit of rage" after she told him it was closing time. Applicants for jobs in the Republican-controlled Congress were asked to complete a questionnaire on 152 issues, including their feelings about the pope, Alexander Solzhenitsyn and "Hard Copy." Daniel Sterling of San Francisco stabbed his girlfriend seven times in the chest and back and drank her blood after they saw *Interview with a Vampire* together. "I enjoyed the movie," he said. The House of Representatives passed GATT. Bill Clinton's horoscope said, "Individual who once declared, 'You don't do anything right' now says, 'You're beautiful!' "


JAPAN SAYS IT SENT US A WARNING IT WOULD BE ATTACKING PEARL HARBOR.
BUT IT WAS AN HOUR LATE.
SO THEY'RE APOLOGIZING.
LET'S SEE... ABOUT 464,000 HOURS LATE.
URGENT
TOLES
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYND.
©1994 THE NEW REPUBLIC
AND THEY ASK, 'NOW WHAT'S THIS BUSINESS ABOUT TRADE BARRIERS?'

DEPARTMENT OF OBFUSCATION: A generation ago political voyeurs flocked to a Paris suburb and returned with Ayatollah Khomeini's assurances that his Iran would be a constitutional democracy. A night of terror followed. The enthusiasts went on to other pursuits. Now they're at it again: this time the target is Saudi Arabia, and the place of pilgrimage is London, where a group of religious extremists called the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights in Saudi Arabia poses as defenders of a would-be democracy. News of the committee, and a long apology for it, comes to us in the latest *New Yorker* from Leslie and Andrew Cockburn. Ignorant, ill-intentioned and gossipy, the article has all the set themes of its kind. There's the heroic, wannabe democrat: Muhammad al-Masari, an exiled, 46-year-old professor at King Saud University and one of the country's "leading theoretical physicists." In fact, Masari is a rabid fundamentalist, dabbling in theocratic incendiarism. One of the founders of Masari's "human rights" committee back in 1993 was a scholar by the name of Abdallah Jibreen. It was Jibreen who issued a *fatwa* decreeing the blood of the Shia in his country (mainly oil industry professionals, loyal to the country's institutions and rulers) *halal*, or permissible to shed. Jibreen quit the committee not long after it went public; but his outlook reflects the kind of bigotry that drives it. Another luminary of the group, Abdullah Tuwaijary, is described as a civil libertarian. It was men of his ilk, from the universities, many schooled in the West, who distributed leaflets calling the educated group of women "prostitutes" and "fallen women" and who gave out the women's phone numbers, urging vengeance because the government had been too lenient. The Cockburns write glowingly of two radical theocrats, Safar al-Hawali and Salman al-Audah, who were arrested in a crackdown last September as "men whose influence extends across the Arab Muslim world." Hawali is a wild preacher who recently prophesied disaster for the United States and his country in the Gulf war, warning his countrymen that America had come not to fight Iraq but to occupy Saudi Arabia. As for Audah, we are told he has many followers among the educated, that he is "another Khomeini." Some recommendation! Where a conservative state now rules, the Cockburns' heroes would build a merciless one. It is men like Audah and Hawali and Masari who turned the term "secularists" into something approximating a writ for banishment and worse. The Cockburns write that the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights has made "routine complaints" about America's support for Israel. More than that: members of the committee, and their supporters, have been hounding the Saudi government since the Madrid Peace Conference

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of October 1991. Their publications and cassette tapes have taken the government to task for taking part in the peace talks. They have condemned the Saudi state for inviting to Saudi Arabia "Jewish rabbis"—presumably members of the American Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee and other American Jews. The committee members have also called the U.N. an instrument of "Jews and crusaders bent on exterminating the Muslims and confiscating their wealth." The U.N. has many flaws, but it should be an easy call between the Saudi dynasty and the zealots who have stepped forth to challenge it. We have a new assignment for the Cockburns: in the alleyways of Gaza the men of Hamas, soulmates of their Saudi heroes, anxiously await visitors from afar. They, too, gunning for Yasir Arafat, have been proclaiming from the rooftops their devotion to the cause of democratic politics. Puff-piece, anyone?

BEHIND THE CURVE:

KEEP 'EM COMING:

School Survey Finds Violence All Over; Big Cities Are Worst

—*The Washington Post*, November 2

REALITY CHECK: The Ford Foundation has just given $550,000 to the NAACP. The foundation hasn't said whether these funds are designated to underwrite the damages the NAACP has agreed to give a former woman employee who threatened to sue its now bounced chief executive, Ben Chavis, for sexual harassment, or to pay the personal charges allegedly incurred by Dr. William Gibson as board chairman. Maybe Ford's largess isn't so clearly earmarked. The moneys, then, may simply go as a first payment on the accumulated $4 million deficit or to carry the costs of the next few weeks.

HOME NEWS: This week we say a sad goodbye to Associate Editor Alexander Star, who moves on to edit *Lingua Franca*, the award-winning magazine about academia. •

Diversity-mongering at the FCC.

COLOR TV

By Jonathan Rauch

The Clinton administration made history in July when the Federal Communications Commission auctioned off almost 600 interactive video licenses. For years the government foolishly was giving away slices of the broadcasting spectrum; persuading Congress to allow auctions has been a real advance. The biggest winner was a Florida company called Commercial Realty St. Pete, whose chief operating officer is a St. Petersburg entrepreneur named James C. Hartley. Commercial Realty won more than $40 million worth of licenses for about $33 million. It accomplished this trick because, under the rules of the auction, bidders received a 25 percent discount if they were owned and controlled by minorities or women—and Commercial Realty's majority owner was a woman. After the auction, eyebrows went up when the identity of the female owner became known: Teresa Hartley, James Hartley's wife.

When I asked Hartley about his wife's role, he said, "She's got a degree in finance and is very active in a lot of businesses we participate in. She's a majority owner in almost everything we do." She plays a "major role," he said, so why should it matter that she's his wife? "A lot of women are wives." He had me there.

Teresa Hartley's discount is part of a constellation of rules that favor not only women but, to an even greater degree, blacks and specified minority ethnic groups; James Hartley would have received his own 25 percent discount if he had been black or Asian. The superficial issue raised by these race-, ethnic- and gender-based preferences is whether people like Hartley are gaming the system. (Shortly after the auction, the FCC duly opened an investigation.) Of course, gaming a federal program to maximize benefits is hardly unusual. Ask any tax lawyer or farmer. The bigger issue is whether it makes sense for the government to favor Mrs. Hartley because she is a woman or to disfavor Mr. Hartley because he is a white man. For that is what the policy does, and on peculiarly self-referential grounds. A number of government programs discriminate to remedy past discrimination, but this one does it for the sake of ethnic and gender diversity—which, in practice, comes uncomfortably close to discriminating for the sake of discrimination.

Under a series of policies dating back to 1978 and now mostly mandated by Congress, the FCC's preferences come in four basic forms, primarily benefiting minorities but also helping women. First, when the FCC weighs the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

merits of several contenders for a license, the applicants' race is one of the factors it considers (though for the moment this policy is up in the air because of a legal fight). Second, investors who sell a broadcast station to a minority-owned company get a substantial tax break. That gives them an incentive to look for, and deal with, minority buyers. Nearly 300 of these so-called tax certificate deals have gone through to date. Third, a station owner who is at risk of losing his license can avoid the travail of FCC hearings by selling the station at a below-market price—and only minority-owned investors may buy the station. Since 1978 thirty-eight of these minorities-only sales have been consummated. Finally, in its new spectrum-license auctions, the FCC gives bidding discounts to minorities and women and, in some cases, sets aside licenses for minorities and women to bid on. The designated minorities are black ("having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa"), Hispanic ("of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture or origin"), Asian (you get the idea) and American Indian.

One rationale for such a program might be that the beneficiaries are needy. But the system is not need-based. Among the black investors who have benefited are the prominent Washington lawyer Vernon Jordan and entertainer Bill Cosby. This is not surprising, because radio and (especially) T.V. stations are expensive. Though blacks and women who bid on stations may not be as wealthy as whites and men who bid, they are certainly not poor; neither, of course, are the white male co-investors. One such investor is the owner and editor-in-chief of this magazine, Martin Peretz, who is no pauper.

A second, even stronger rationale for preferences might be to remedy past or current discrimination. However, as a federal appellate ruling noted in 1989, "There is no finding by a court or anyone of discrimination in the allocation of broadcasting channels." All sides agree the problem is one of money, not race or gender: "The main bar to minority ownership is really one of funding, as opposed to a lack of commitment on the part of the industry or the FCC," says Jeff Baumann, general counsel for the National Association of Broadcasters.

Nonetheless, the Supreme Court upheld the program in the 1990 case *Metro Broadcasting* v. *FCC*, Justice William Brennan's final decision. And the rationale the Court accepted is the one the government itself originally used: as steward of the airwaves, government has an obligation to see that many different voices have access. In setting up the preferential policies, the FCC said: "We are compelled to observe that the views of racial minorities continue to be inadequately represented in the broadcast media." In upholding the program, the Court relied on the same rationale: "Congress and the FCC have selected minority ownership policies primarily to promote programming diversity," wrote Brennan, adding that this was a legitimate government interest.

There were problems with this rationale, as became evident over time. No one has a clear idea of what constitutes "minority views"—a concept apparently implying that people think with their skin or their gonads. No one has objectively demonstrated a lack of minority or female views on the air. No one has figured out just what constitutes minority programming, unless it is whatever programs minority members tune in. Most important, the rationale depends on the assumption that minority-owned stations do more "minority" programming, by whatever definition. This assumption turns out to be unsupported. "Content analyses done over the last fifteen years show really very small differences," says Jorge Reina Schement, a communications professor at Rutgers University. Minority-owned stations need to make money and maximize ratings, and "they operate in the same marketplace everyone else operates in." Another expert, George Washington University's Christopher H. Sterling, agrees. "What research has been done so far comes up showing no significant difference."

For these reasons, you don't hear much talk anymore about programming diversity. And programming diversity can't be the rationale for the policies anyway. Under congressional orders, the FCC now applies preferences to licenses for information-carrying technologies such as two-way pagers and interactive video—and those businesses don't originate programming any more than the phone company does. The original rationale for minority or gender preferences can't possibly cover paging services without being stretched beyond all recognition.

So, without fanfare, "programming diversity" has been more or less dropped in the wastebasket. Implicitly replacing it is a rationale that's much broader. Ethnic representation is now viewed as an end unto itself.

According to the FCC, only about 3 percent of commercial radio and T.V. stations are minority-held. (In cable T.V., the numbers are even worse.) "Way, way short of the ideal," FCC Chairman Reed E. Hundt told Congress. "Abysmally low," says FCC General Counsel William E. Kennard. Actually, the Census Bureau says that minority-owned firms account for just under 4 percent of all business revenues. The 3 percent number in radio and T.V., although low, isn't wildly out of line with that. In reply, Kennard suggests that both numbers are too low. "The question should not focus on how low is low and how high is high," Kennard says. "The question is how we increase the level of participating minorities in society, both generally and for communications."

Everyone wishes that ethnic minorities—especially blacks—owned a larger stake in the economy. For instance, it's clear, says Schement, that minority-owned stations employ more minorities than white-owned ones, and having minorities in broadcasting seems like a good thing. But once you get into the implications of this kind of thinking, the questions become complicated: How many Asian American broadcasters are enough? And, conversely, how many white male or Pakistani-American ones are too many? What's "the ideal" racial mix to which Hundt alludes? Hundt, in testimony to Congress, gave a clue: "We have a long way to go as a country in getting to that kind of parallelism between the demographic picture of the country and the ownership ranks

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THINKING SCIENCE

All over the world, the need to learn the language of science grows more urgent every day. Only a basic grasp of mathematical and scientific thinking equips us to evaluate the impact of new technologies, therapies, and public policies on issues ranging from AIDS, health care and the economy to drugs, the environment, defense and interplanetary space exploration. Scientific literacy has become a critical decision-making tool. ❦ The Weizmann Institute of Science tackles the challenge with zest. ❦ At Israel's foremost research center, top scientists take time to develop new programs for youngsters through high school. The Science Teaching Department trains teachers, publishes journals and devises games, kits and computer materials. Textbooks appear in Hebrew and Arabic. Other youth activities include math-by-mail exchanges, a national math olympiad, science-and-music sessions, and campus visits for demonstrations and workshops in the Youth Village and Garden of Science. Gifted students from the U.S. and many other foreign countries vie for places in the exciting annual pre-college International Summer Science Program at the Weizmann Institute. ❦ Fostering scientific literacy responds to universal objectives. It deserves support everywhere.

The Weizmann Institute, founded in 1934, is a community of 2,300 scientists, engineers and scientists-in-training engaged in a full agenda of 800 research projects ranging from basic medical research in cancer, AIDS, neurosciences and children's diseases to chemistry, physics, agriculture, computer science and the environment.

AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR THE WEIZMANN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE
51 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10010 212/779-2500

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in communications." The communications industry, he often says, needs to "look more like the country it serves." In other words, rough proportionality by race, gender and designated ethnicity—the defining goal of modern numerical multiculturalism.

Intuitively this is an appealing position. Logically, however, it's afflicted with the same swampy circularity that characterizes so many university affirmative action programs. Advocates cite lack of opportunity as the cause of disparate outcomes, and they point to disparate outcomes to prove lack of opportunity. They say the goal is not to fix the score but to level the playing field, but they don't deem the field level until the score comes out right. Doubletalk results in aimlessness and race-conscious caprice: because explicit minority goals are controversial and may be illegal, rulemakers make up the policy as they go along. That's the path the FCC (again, with Congress's prodding) is now on. "We don't have any specific quantitative goals," Hundt told Congress. Instead he talked about "achiev[ing] the desired results of greater opportunity"—a classic affirmative action oxymoron. This conflation of ends and means is a recipe for arbitrary policymaking and discrimination for its own sake.

Not far below the surface is the worry that the market may never produce the desired (but not explicitly targeted) result. "You know, just like diversity, participation is not just going to happen," Representative Earl Hilliard told Hundt. "It doesn't work that way in a capitalistic system." It certainly hasn't so far: the FCC is the first to say that minority preferences have so far done nowhere near enough—whatever "enough" is. "That day is so far off I would view these programs as almost permanent," says Baumann of the broadcasters' association.

Discriminating to promote diversity for a whole industrial sector goes much further than merely remedying past bias. It gets the government in the business of racial engineering. Yet that's what the FCC and Congress are now doing. The policy, however admirable the intentions, makes a mockery of Justice Lewis Powell's pronouncement in *Bakke*: "Preferring members of any one group for no reason other than race or ethnic origin is discrimination for its own sake. This the Constitution forbids."

Congress and the FCC would be better off doing one of two things. On the one hand, explicitly declare a numerical goal for minority and female ownership of communications companies, and face the flak and legal challenges that would result. Just how many minority owners are enough? How far should the rules be bent to get the desired results? If the target isn't reached by some date certain, should the program keep going forever? Why choose these minority groups for preferences—why Asian Americans but not Arab-Americans, for instance? In public hearings and legislative debate, these questions might not be wisely answered, but at least they'd be honestly confronted instead of finessed.

Or, on the other hand, get rid of preferences based on skin color, ethnicity and gender, and replace them with rules that favor newcomers and little guys who have problems raising capital, whatever their race. The FCC is already drifting in this direction by extending its bidding discounts in one upcoming auction only to companies that are both minority-owned and small. Other preferences for small businesses exist already. Economists hate this sort of policy (it punishes large, successful companies), but at least the rationale is based on economics instead of racial origins.

But don't hold your breath. In July there were no successful minority bidders for national two-way paging licenses. In a September interview, both FCC Chairman Hundt and commission member Andrew C. Barrett elaborately declined to express dissatisfaction with the no-minority outcome. "Our role was to open up opportunities, and we did that," said Barrett. "We never promised anyone that financing would be available." Nonetheless, like a university claiming to have no minority admissions goals while lowering its SAT thresholds for minorities, the FCC said with actions what it would not say with words; for the next set of paging auctions in November, it upped the minority discount to 40 percent—one of several new preferences for round two. The result: minorities and women won eleven out of thirty licenses.

JONATHAN RAUCH, a frequent TNR contributor, is author of *Demosclerosis: The Silent Killer of American Government* (Times Books).

The real story of Bihać.

PICKED POCKET

By Charles Lane

On front lines a few miles west of Bihać, a young soldier named Osme recently explained why he joined Serb forces from next-door Croatia in their assault on the United Nations safe area. Driven from his home three months ago by the Bosnian Army's V Corps, Osme believes the Bihać pocket will never have peace until "war mongers" loyal to the Sarajevo government have been driven out. "The V Corps must be defeated," he told the Associated Press, parroting Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžić. The odd thing is that Osme, like hundreds of other soldiers now moving on Bihać, is a Muslim himself. He is loyal to Fikret Abdić, the renegade Muslim tycoon-cum-warlord who broke with Sarajevo over his decision to make a separate peace with the Serbs, and who has been waging a Serb-backed campaign to wrest the pocket from V Corps ever since.

The world's outrage over Bihać reflects the widely held, and broadly accurate, view of the Bosnia war as a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

case of Serbian aggression against largely defenseless, mostly Muslim, civilians. The prime culprits in the pending demise of the safe area are the Serbs and a Western alliance that, buckling to Serb threats, has failed to defend the U.N. safe area or even enforce a cease-fire in Croatia that was supposed to disarm Serbs there. But as Osme's story shows, there is more to the Bihać tragedy than the failure of outsiders. It is neither a simple tale of unprovoked aggression nor a case of ancient and unfathomable ethnic hatreds. And when the history of Bihać's fall is finally written, a chapter must be reserved for the blundering of Bosnia's squabbling Muslim leaders themselves.

Bihać is bordered on the north and west by the Krajina, a historically Serb-majority and currently Serb-held area of Croatia; it is hemmed in to the east and south by largely Muslim Bosnian lands that have been ethnically cleansed and occupied by Bosnian Serb forces. Bihać also contains the last link in a rail line that would connect Belgrade with the Krajina capital of Knin. Still, the Serbs have no historical or ethnic claim on the pocket; thanks to the ebb and flow of the Ottoman Empire, the area's population is overwhelmingly Muslim, and has been for as long as anyone can remember. In every peace plan so far the Serbs have acquiesced in awarding "Turkish Croatia," as the area was once known, to the Muslims.

The Bihać pocket has a more Islamic atmosphere than the rest of Bosnia. It's the first place I saw green and white crescent-and-star flags flapping from minarets, and even a few young men wearing fezes to a religious festival. Still, Bihać's Muslims have long had a pragmatic, almost accommodationist, outlook befitting their unique geopolitical situation. Serbian-Muslim cooperation in World War II helped make Bihać a stronghold of the Partisans. In 1954 Serbs, Muslims and Croats teamed up to join in an ill-fated peasant revolt against Tito.

No man embodies these Bihaćian traits better than Fikret Abdić. The former Yugoslav Communist government jailed him in 1987 for allegedly issuing phony bonds in the name of Agrokomerc, a food processing company that he built into an economic powerhouse during his twenty years as director. But to thousands in the Bihać pocket, where Agrokomerc was based, "Babo" (Daddy) Abdić was a font of jobs and money, and a hero. Acquitted and released in 1989, he was elected to represent Bihać on Bosnia's ten-member collective presidency. When Serb-Muslim tensions flared in the spring of 1992, Abdić mediated between nationalist Bihać Muslims and mainly Serbian Yugoslav National Army officers dug in at the city's strategic military airport. Abdić won the Serbs safe passage out of town—though they detonated explosives at the airport before leaving.

After the war in Bosnia began in 1992, Bosnian Serbs dug in on the Grabez Plateau to the east and shelled Bihać for a couple of months—killing hundreds and stopping the V Corps from acting against the genocidal campaign going on behind Serb lines in northern Bosnia. But the Serbs never seriously tried to take the town. And from the fall of 1992 on, Bihać remained peaceful, even prosperous. From his castle near Velika Kladuša, at the north end of the pocket, Abdić built a vast smuggling operation that brought meat, fuel and a host of other supplies from Croatia's Adriatic ports, through the Krajina, to Bihać. Abdić's old Serb and Croat connections, nurtured in his Agrokomerc days and now freshened by payoffs, made it possible. The U.N. got into the act: French peacekeepers guarded Abdić's convoys from Zagreb in exchange for the use of Agrokomerc real estate as a camp.

Abdić's racket thrived because it was expedient for all concerned. Serbs and Croats got money to buy arms to use on each other (or on Muslims elsewhere in Bosnia). The U.N. got a safe area success story. The government of Bosnia in Sarajevo, busy with other matters and unable to maintain contact with distant Bihać, tolerated Abdić's scam as a means to stabilize one of the few large areas under its nominal control. But Abdić grew increasingly contemptuous of what he saw as Bosnian President Alija Izetbegović's futile effort to build an Islamic state. He even began advertising his operation as a model of how Yugoslavia might rebuild interethnic cooperation through trade. "We see ourselves as the Cayman Islands of the Balkans," one of his lieutenants later told *The New York Times*.

The end began in June 1993, when Abdić's willingness to cooperate with the Serbs caught the attention of David Owen, the European Union's peace mediator for Bosnia. At the time, Owen was pushing Izetbegović to agree to the latest of his plans to chop up Bosnia along ethnic lines. To put pressure on Izetbegović, Owen began promoting Abdić as a leader of "dissidents" on the Bosnian presidency who were willing to settle the conflict. This was tantamount to an Owen-orchestrated coup, and Abdić, well aware of this fact, cheerfully played along.

Izetbegović, fearing that other regional Muslim leaders might follow Abdić's example, engineered the Bosnian parliament's rejection of Owen's plan and moved to isolate Abdić politically. Abdić countered by declaring himself president of "autonomous" Bihać and signed peace treaties with Radovan Karadžić of the Bosnian Serbs and with the Croats. With the help of the surrounding Serbs, he began arming a militia (including deserters from the V Corps) in Velika Kladuša. Sarajevo ordered the V Corps to crush Abdić.

The former Yugoslav National Army officer who commanded the 15,000-man V Corps, Captain Ramiz Dreković, was only too happy to oblige. He had never even pretended to be defending the ideal of a multiethnic state. The one time I met him, in May 1993, I realized that not all Serbian propaganda about Muslim extremism was unfounded. In an office bedecked with Islamic paraphernalia and Arabic-language diplomas, Dreković threatened terrorist attacks in Europe as retaliation for the genocide against his people. Dreković wasn't even from Bihać, but from the Sanjak, a Muslim-majority area of Serbia known as a hotbed of Muslim nationalism. Dreković

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ran a tight ship: his spirited units were the first Bosnian forces I saw who saluted their officers.

From September 1993 on, Bihać was the scene of a bloody fratricidal sideshow to the Serb-Muslim war in the rest of Bosnia. Both sides committed terrible abuses. Abdić, acting less and less like a sugar daddy and more and more like a dictator, opened a prison camp in which hundreds of Muslims suspected of opposing his rule were brutalized. The V Corps, for its part, harassed and mistreated the 1,000 remaining Serbs in Bihać until they begged the U.N. to get them out. Three months ago, the V Corps, now commanded by Gen. Atif Dudaković, finally took Velika Kladuša, driving 17,000 of Abdić's followers into Serbian Krajina.

The V Corps might have stopped and consolidated its control over the pocket. But both Dudaković and Sarajevo were feeling their oats. The Serbs in Krajina and Bosnia were still struggling to cope with the cutoff of aid from the Milošević regime in Belgrade. Thanks to the support of the United States, Bosnia and Croatia were once again allies, ending the Bosnian army's crippling struggle with the Croats and opening the way for new arms shipments through Croatia from Iran and elsewhere. U.S. support for lifting the arms embargo against Bosnia gave the Bosnians an incentive to demonstrate their improving prowess on the battlefield.

In October the V Corps staged a dramatic breakout from Bihać, driving the Bosnian Serbs from 100 square miles of adjacent territory—and, it should be noted, that would have belonged to them under most international peace plans. About 10,000 Serb civilians fled, telling foreign journalists of looting and other abuses by the Muslim troops. Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzić (who recently has demanded NATO air strikes against the Serbs and blamed the U.N. for a pending massacre in Bihać), crowed that V Corps victories meant that the military momentum had shifted to the Muslims, and that now the Serbs would have to bargain seriously.

But the Serbs did not oblige. Running low on fuel, and sensing that the U.S. decision to stop enforcing the arms embargo presaged greater American steps to help their enemies, they chose to strike back while they still could. Gen. Ratko Mladić made two audacious decisions. To make up for lost artillery positions on the Grabez Plateau, he attacked Bihać from the air, in open defiance of the U.N.'s NATO-enforced no-fly zone. And he broke the U.N. rule against staging actions from Serb-held areas of Croatia, attacking Velika Kladuša with the help of Abdić's rebel Muslim army. Having somehow failed to anticipate that U.N. flaccidity would enable Mladić to make such a pincers move, the V Corps lost the ground it had just won and is now waging a last-ditch defense of its own headquarters.

Once again, Mladić and the Serbs have won by calling the international community's bluff. This, along with Owen's ill-conceived Abdić gambit, constitutes the heart of the outside world's culpability in the destruction of Bihać. Yet international actors, the U.S. especially, also bear another kind of responsibility. By appearing willing to do more for the Muslim-led Bosnian government than it actually was, the American government encouraged Sarajevo to launch an ill-considered and ultimately disastrous military campaign that has cost it not only territory, but also moral standing. Yet after so many past promises of outside help had proved false, how could Bosnian leaders have gambled so much so recklessly on them this time?

The Serbs' objective now is the unconditional surrender of the V Corps. Since no outside power seems willing to stop them, they will probably fight on until they get their way. The ethnic cleansing of the Bihać pocket's 180,000 Muslim residents and Croatian intervention to stop it could follow—though Mladić may eventually find it more expedient to control Bihać and its Muslims through a reinstated Abdić. At the war's outset, people in Bihać joked that the fighting would lead to the creation of three new countries: Velika Srpska (Great Serbia), Velika Hrvatska (Great Croatia), and Velika Kladuša. Thirty-one months and an ocean of blood later, that witticism has become prophecy. •

The New Democrat delusion.

FROM HELL

By John B. Judis

On the eve of his Senate election defeat, Oklahoma Representative David McCurdy, chairman of the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), tried to explain where Bill Clinton, and by extension the Democratic Party, had gone wrong. "The president's problems were created because he ran as a New Democrat and has failed to govern as one," McCurdy said. This distinction between Clinton, the New Democrat candidate, and Clinton, the old Democrat president, has become the prevailing explanation of why Clinton failed in his first two years and how he can succeed in his next two. It's misleading. Clinton did run in 1992 as a different kind of Democrat from past party nominees, but not exactly the kind of DLC New Democrat that McCurdy and DLC President Al From now hold up as a model. His campaign included striking elements of populism and economic nationalism that were alien to the DLC's concept of a New Democrat. The question now facing Clinton is not whether he should return to being a New Democrat, but what kind of New Democrat he should return to being.

From and Will Marshall, president of the DLC's Progressive Policy Institute, introduced the concept of a New Democrat and so set the political stage for Clinton's success in 1992. Through the DLC, From and Marshall developed a prescient and important idea: the Democrats were losing elections because they were losing white

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

The High Price of Neglect

According to a recent report put out by the Carnegie Corporation, many children suffer permanent intellectual damage before they enter first grade. When the report, "Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children," came out earlier this year, I hoped that this finding would be widely discussed and enormously influential, but it seems to have sunk without a trace. Was it too troubling in its implications? Or too politically incorrect? Whatever the reason, its message must be heard.

The report cites recent scientific studies that present a new picture of how the brain matures during the first three years of life. Neuroscientists now believe that a child's future intellectual capacity is shaped during these years by the kind of stimulation the child gets. The Carnegie report compares the brain of a newborn child to a tangled and unconnected mass of electronic circuitry. As a child begins to recognize things around him—"to make connections"—the circuitry becomes organized. How much comes into use depends on the kind of stimulation a child gets, and the circuitry that is not used shuts down permanently.

When parents talk or sing to a child, they are providing stimulation that is essential to the maturation of the child's brain.

Parents play a critical role in helping a baby organize this neural circuitry. When they talk or sing to a child or play with him, they are doing more than amusing the child; they are providing stimulation that is essential to the maturation of the child's brain. If they or someone else does not provide this stimulation, his development will be permanently impaired.

"Building a Better Brain for Baby," a *New York Times* article on the Carnegie report (April 17, 1994), cites a series of experiments on kittens that underline the essential nature of stimulation for the maturing brain: "Some [kittens] were raised with one eye sutured shut or covered by an opaque contact lens. Others were reared in a visual world consisting of nothing but vertical or horizontal stripes." After a time, the kittens were returned to a normal sensory world, but it was too late: "Eyes deprived of light in those first crucial days were now blind. Kittens raised in a vertical world were unable to see horizontal lines.... For lack of stimulation, the neurological wiring—the connections, called synapses, that pass signals from neuron to neuron—had not developed."

Most people probably think that lack of adequate stimulation is mainly a problem for the infants born to poor inner-city parents—like the harassed single mothers who have to work day and night to make ends meet or the unmarried teenagers who are unprepared for motherhood and often lead chaotic lives. It does affect these youngsters, but the problem is much broader.

In 1991, 53 percent of *all* women with one-year-old babies were in the workforce (up from 17 percent in 1965), and nearly half of the children under three were being looked after by someone other than their parents. High-quality childcare is very expensive and not very abundant, so many of these babies and toddlers spend their entire day in situations where they get little attention or stimulation. "Starting Points" cites studies showing that the care infants and toddlers get is often "of such substandard quality that it adversely affect[s]...[their] development." And after a day at work, exhausted parents may have little time or energy to do more than feed and bathe their child and put him to bed. How many of these babies are failing to get the stimulation they need to develop properly?

These findings also shed new light on discussions of the ability of schools to educate all children. The idea that every child can learn—and learn to a high level—is a major premise of many reports on education put out by business groups and others. This is a noble expression of faith and hope in human capabilities, but it may simply not be true. There may be a permanent gap between youngsters who have had the stimulation necessary to their mental development and those who have not—no matter what schools and teachers do.

If the ideas "Starting Points" presents were generally accepted, caring for young children might get the priority it deserves. Parents might decide it was absolutely necessary to take time off during the first few years of a child's life—the way a person decides it is absolutely necessary to take time off when he is seriously ill. And we might have legislation that made it easy, instead of punitive, for parents to do that.

We need to rethink our social policies and our attitudes toward child-rearing to bring them in line with what medical science is discovering about how babies develop and what they need. If we don't, we risk squandering the future of our society.

To order the report, send $10 to the Carnegie Corporation of N.Y., P.O. 753, Waldorf, MD 20604.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1994 by Albert Shanker.

ADVERTISEMENT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

middle-class male votes. In its first years, the DLC, whose membership included Southern moderates such as Sam Nunn and Chuck Robb and Northern liberals such as Bill Gray, did not have a common view of how the Democrats had lost these votes and how to get them back. But during Robb's tenure as chairman from 1986 to 1988 and Nunn's from 1988 to 1990, the organization's leadership developed a line on the Democratic defeat: they had been taken over by "liberal fundamentalists," who included members of the AFL-CIO, NOW, the ACLU, SANE-Freeze and the Rainbow Coalition. The DLC's analysis was sound, except, perhaps, in the case of labor unions, which in many areas remained the only institution keeping many middle-class voters in the Democratic Party.

The DLC argued that to reclaim the middle class, Democrats had to "inoculate themselves," in From's words, against liberal fundamentalism by taking clear positions more acceptable to the middle class. These included support for military spending, the death penalty and welfare reform. Taking these positions would get middle-class voters not to dismiss Democrats. But what would get them to vote for Democrats? On this, there were two different kinds of answers within the DLC.

In the wake of Michael Dukakis's defeat in 1988, DLC staff member Bill Galston, a refugee from the Mondale campaign, provided one argument. Galston, who is now in the Clinton White House, contended that by gaining "credibility on defense, foreign policy and social values," Democrats could get a hearing for a "progressive economic program." Galston told a DLC conference in January 1989 that "A large majority of Americans still identify the Republicans as the party of the rich and the Democrats as the party of fair treatment for all people."

But as chairmen, Robb and Nunn took more equivocal positions on economics. They were much closer to being business conservatives than Democratic populists. (Nunn would spend several years working on a plan to replace the progressive income tax with a consumption tax.) While they were chairs, the DLC developed a program for national service that became the centerpiece of their agenda and was introduced as a bill by Nunn and McCurdy. Instead of re-establishing the class basis of the Democratic Party, Nunn, Robb, McCurdy and From sought to establish the Democrats as the party of community, patriotism and social responsibility against the selfish individualism of the Republicans. Along with national service, the DLC emphasized reinventing government (through PPI Fellow David Osborne), welfare reform and school choice. It conceived of welfare reform along the same lines as national service, requiring reciprocity from beneficiaries in the form of work.

Clinton, who served as the DLC's chairman in 1991, took several DLC members into his campaign and borrowed some of his basic ideas from the DLC: the emphasis on the "forgotten middle class" and on reciprocity—expressed by Will Marshall in the idea of a "new covenant"—the support for welfare reform, national service, reinventing government and the inoculation strategy. (Clinton's efforts at inoculation included flying back to Little Rock to oversee the execution of a mentally retarded convict and denouncing Sister Souljah at a Rainbow Coalition event.) Clinton would also endorse the DLC idea of building centrist coalitions with Republicans, promising during the campaign to appoint Republicans to his Cabinet. But, in addition, Clinton's campaign was a product of two other influences: first, an economic populism advanced by his campaign managers James Carville and Paul Begala, pollster Stan Greenberg and advisers Robert Reich and Derek Shearer; second, an anti-establishment economic nationalism developed largely in response to Ross Perot's campaign.

Clinton's platform statement, "Putting People First," contained all these influences, but if any predominated, it was probably the liberal populist. It painted the Democrats as a middle-class party and the Republicans as the party that favored the "rich and the special interests" through its "trickle-down" economics. It took shots at "outrageous executive pay" and "drug price gouging."

Perot-style economic nationalism got at least equal billing with DLC-style New Democrat politics: Clinton promised to end tax breaks for American companies that "ship American jobs overseas" and "crack down on foreign companies that prosper here and manipulate tax laws to their advantage." It called for a "stronger, sharper 'Super 301' trade bill" and for "banning trade negotiators from cashing in on their positions by serving as representatives of foreign corporations or governments." Clinton's fall campaign reflected this same mix of roughly (out of 100) forty parts liberal populism, thirty parts economic nationalism and thirty parts DLC Democrat. And when Clinton was described as a New Democrat, it was this complex of positions that was denoted.

During the campaign, the "populists" and the DLC Democrats sniped at each other continually. While Begala and Carville's populism, like From and Marshall's New Democracy, was rooted in a defense of "those who do the work, pay the taxes, raise the kids and play by the rules," the differences came over what programs to emphasize and how sharply to draw the line politically between the middle and upper classes. The two camps also differed over economic nationalism. DLC Democrats were free traders and, as the beneficiary of lobbyists' largess, did not readily attack "influence peddlers." Yet it was this eclectic and expansive New Democrat politics that triumphed in November 1992—not the DLC's more restrictive version.

Clinton's difficulties as president were largely due to his failure to meet either the restricted or the expansive test of being a New Democrat. He dropped the DLC's emphasis on the new covenant and its coalition strategy with Republicans. He failed to name any Republicans to his Cabinet and ignored them in most of his legislative strategies. Clinton also abandoned a populist attempt to drive a wedge between the middle and upper classes and to portray the Republicans as the patrons of the rich, refusing to do anything to offend businesses or

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

banks. And he abandoned Perot's economic nationalism, backing off from trade clashes with China and Japan and acquiescing when high officials left to become lobbyists. He did retain fragments of the original programs—from public investment to health care to national service—but they were deprived of their wider political justification.

Clinton's failure was most evident in his health care bill. During the campaign, he had presented it as a means of stopping spiraling health care costs. He skewered both the drug and insurance companies for taking advantage of consumers. But as president, he offered his bill mainly as a way to assure coverage to the uninsured. As a result, the opponents of health care reform were able to paint Clinton's bill (unfairly) as an attempt to get the middle class to pay for the poor's insurance. It was another liberal welfare measure that ignored the middle class.

Clinton equally rejected advice from the DLC that he first seek Republican and moderate Democrat support for a health care initiative. Instead, he devised his own bill and then let the Democratic House and Senate leadership try to pass some version of it. The result was no bill at all and perhaps no health care reform for the rest of the decade. What could Clinton have done instead? He could have made his case for universal health care reform in populist terms, but in recognition of the issue's complexity, appointed a bipartisan committee to come up with a program by September 1993. With twenty-three Republicans initially supporting John Chafee's proposal for universal coverage, Clinton might well have gotten a bill that phased in universal coverage and provided a foundation for further reform.

In the 1994 elections, some of the DLC Democrats fared poorly. Both McCurdy and Jim Cooper got drubbed in Senate races. At the same time, some of the seemingly vulnerable "old Democrats" like Sander Levin in suburban Detroit and Edward Kennedy in Massachusetts did surprisingly well. Robb survived by running a race that pandered to exactly those constituencies that the DLC had initially scorned—upper-middle-class feminists, labor unions and blacks.

It is probably unfair to blame McCurdy's and Cooper's poor showings on their version of New Democrat politics. But their poor showing does suggest that as Republicans gain a foothold in the South and as the parties polarize along racial lines, DLC new Democrats will have trouble holding their seats. To survive at all, Southern Democrats may be forced, as Robb was, to combine a multiracial class politics with an appeal to suburban baby boomers alienated by the religious right.

In the North, Democrats won who were able to evoke the class differences between the parties while avoiding the stigmas of liberal fundamentalism. Kennedy defused challenger Mitt Romney in Massachusetts not by countering Romney's welfare program with a New Democrat-style program, but by dramatizing the callous practices of businesses to which Romney was linked. The only DLC-ite to do really well was Connecticut Senator Joseph Lieberman, who got 60 percent of the vote. But Lieberman does not really fit the From-McCurdy mold. He inoculated himself on the major social issues, but he was also strongly pro-labor, and can evoke economic populism as well as Kennedy.

Since the November 8 election, Clinton has been presented with a choice between DLC "New Democrats" and "populists." The "populists"—Begala, George Stephanopoulos, et al.—want Clinton to adopt the Harry Truman strategy, after he lost the Congress in 1946. They want him to attack the Republicans aggressively, vetoing measures that he thinks favor the wealthy, while making proposals to improve the economic lot of the middle class. Part of this strategy makes perfect sense: Clinton shouldn't miss a chance to veto Republican legislation that favors the wealthy. But the populists overlook how tenuous Clinton's hold on the presidency really is.

Clinton's situation is not Truman's. Truman sat atop a very powerful political base in labor unions and city machines. He could veto the Republican Taft-Hartley bill with the expectation that the AFL and CIO, which then represented almost 40 percent of American workers, would rally to his presidency. Clinton's situation is far more similar to Jimmy Carter's after the Republican surge in the 1978 elections or Ronald Reagan's after the Democrats won back the Senate in 1986. If he simply defies the Republican Congress, he will appear to be frustrating the popular will and contributing to gridlock and petty factionalism.

The "New Democrats"—Al Gore, Rahm Emmanuel, et al.—don't ignore economics, but they want Clinton to concentrate on issues on which he shares common ground with the Republicans. From has suggested again that Clinton appoint some Republicans to his Cabinet. He should probably go further and fashion a kind of coalition government by appointing Republicans and by proposing bipartisan committees to come up with common solutions to health care, welfare and campaign reform. If the Republicans balk at this approach, then they will have to bear the weight of gridlock.

While the New Democrats are right about coalition strategy, however, they are mistaken in pressing Clinton to concentrate on free trade zones, welfare reform and reinventing government. Joining Republican efforts to make the world safe for American multinationals will not endear Clinton to downwardly mobile middle-class voters; moreover, it will signal to workers a lack of concern about their job security. If anything, the Democrats have to move in the opposite direction, getting tougher in trade talks with Japan and China, evoking the legitimate concerns of economic nationalism in order to defuse the more xenophobic, the power of which was sadly evident in California Governor Pete Wilson's successful re-election campaign. And while Clinton cannot renege on his promise to reform welfare, he would be far better off if the issue were to get caught up in Republican gridlock between the House and Senate or disappear in a bipartisan committee. Clinton stands no chance in this Congress of getting the generous bill he and the DLC initially favored. Most likely, the Republi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cans will produce a mean-spirited and punitive measure that Clinton will have to veto on moral grounds.

This debate between administration populists and New Democrats bears out the confusion that prevails within Democratic ranks. In fact, the future lies not in the rejection of one strategy over another, but in the synthesis of the two. Both the populists and the New Democrats want to focus the party on the needs and values of the middle class. The DLC clearly has been right about the kind of coalition and compromise strategy that Clinton should have pursued with Republicans and about the importance of Clinton's distancing himself from lingering liberal fundamentalism. But the populists are equally right about the importance of using economic issues to revive the class basis of the Democratic Party. Clinton needs to reclaim the "New Democratic agenda of 1992," but it is a different kind of agenda from the one that his critics now imagine. •

Dreams and displacement in Brentwood.

LOS ANGELES 90049

By Douglas Coupland

> We are born, so to speak, provisionally, it doesn't matter where. It is only gradually that we compose within ourselves our true place of origin so that we may be born there retrospectively and each day more definitely.
>
> —Rainer Maria Rilke

August 4, 1994

Brentwood, California, population 35,327, is the Los Angeles suburb where Marilyn Monroe's ambiguous death occurred in the early evening hours of August 4, 1962. It is also the psychic nexus of the O.J. Simpson-Nicole Brown Simpson saga, which came to an end somewhere between 10 p.m. and 11 p.m., June 12, 1994.

Brentwood does not exist. Not technically. It is only a Los Angeles suburb—a zip code: 90049. Letters sent to Brentwood will be returned to sender. Roughly 250 letters a day end up in the small, Northern California town of Brentwood, zip code 94513.

Had it not been for water, Brentwood could have transcended mere zip code-ness and had genuine civic autonomy. But in June 1916, Brentwood signed a devil's pact with the City of Los Angeles, receiving freshly imported water courtesy of William Mulholland, chief of the L.A. Water Department, in return for incorporation. Brentwood's property values increased and Los Angeles gained almost fifty square miles of new territory. Beverly Hills and Santa Monica avoided this Faustian pact by virtue of their having enough well water to resist enshackling by Los Angeles.

> Community in Los Angeles means homogeneity of race, class and, especially, home values. Community designations—i.e., the street signs across the city identifying areas as "Canoga Park," "Holmby Hills," "Silverlake" [Brentwood] and so on—have no legal status. In the last analysis they are merely favors granted by City Council members to well-organized neighborhoods or businessmen's groups seeking to have their areas identified.
>
> —*City of Quartz* by Mike Davis

It is almost impossible to locate someone who knows where Brentwood begins and ends—as though certainty of boundary would imperil land values. In transient neighborhoods, such as Brentwood, the slightest hint of undesirability can dramatically affect property resale values; more than 80 percent of Brentwood's population arrived after 1980.

Only a U.S. Post Office map marked with colored pencils inside the Barrington Avenue Postal Station yields definitive results. Brentwood is a squiggly Vermont-shaped rectangle, delineated by Wilshire, Centinela, Montana and Twenty-Sixth on the south; the L.A. County Veterans Administration and the 405 Freeway and Sepulveda on the east; Mulholland Drive on the north; the Sullivan Canyon Fire Road on the west.

Technically, Brentwood also includes Los Angeles's Veterans Administration Cemetery—"The Arlington Cemetery of the West"—which is east of the 405, as well as parts of Bel Air, though Bel Aireans would fight to the death to refute this notion.

Cover story in *The Economist*, August 6, 1994: "Does It Matter Where You Are?"

In the daytime, Brentwood is almost exclusively a city of women—old and young, concentrated in a small

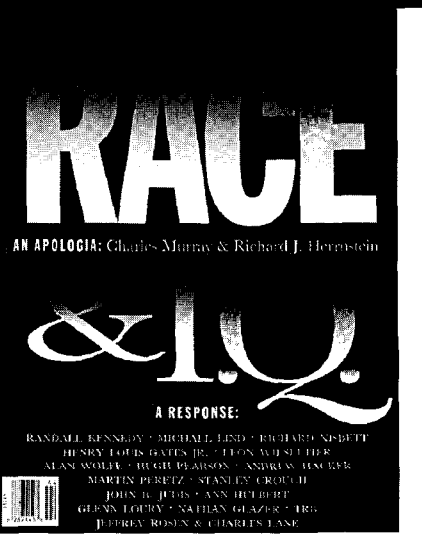
DOUGLAS COUPLAND is author of the forthcoming *Microserfs* (HarperCollins).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Make The New Republic Your Gift

If it's the thought that counts, count on The New Republic when you're thinking of the perfect holiday gift. The New Republic is a smart way to show your thoughtfulness. It's stimulating and timely, controversial, and ground-breaking, the kind of gift that shows how highly you think of those to whom you give it.

If it's the thought that counts, give thoughts that count.



It's Smart And Easy To Give The New Republic

Call 1-800-827-1289

to order and you can charge your gift of The New Republic. Or mail in your order with the postpaid card attached. Or simply use the coupon below. We'll send handsome holiday cards in your name announcing your gift, which will begin with the first issue in January 1995. Please order before December 15, 1994 for holiday giving. Choose The New Republic for a happy new year!

THE NEW REPUBLIC, P.O. Box 602, Mt. Morris, Illinois 61054
Please enter the following gift subscriptions to THE NEW REPUBLIC:

Payment method: ☐ Check enclosed ☐ Bill me later
Charge my: ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

Card No. _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

YOUR NAME:

From _____
(Please Print Name)

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

☐ *Renew my own subscription at these holiday rates*

GIFT NO. 1: $69.97/ONE YEAR/48 ISSUES

To _____
(Please Print Name)

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

GIFT NO. 2: $44.95/ONE YEAR/48 ISSUES

To _____
(Please Print Name)

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Canadian subscribers please add $15/year postage for each gift.
All other subscribers outside the U.S., please add $30/year for each gift.

NTHD94

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

retail strip along San Vicente Boulevard. There are women peppered with hunky aspiring actors; there are slinky actresses springing about, going from their auditions to their gymnasiums. It is a soap opera terrarium of post-humanized objects of desire pantherishly unleashed into the boudoir. The worker bees are mostly across the 405—or in Santa Monica or in the Valley, at ARCO, Disney, The Prudential, Security Bank, RAND, Lorimar, UCLA and the Jon Douglas Realtors Company.

Social note: at the restaurants, alfresco dining is passé; shade is in—not because of U.V.s but because one side effect of the new families of antidepressants is photosensitivity. Another altered relationship between body modification and socialization: it is no longer considered improper to appear in public greased with post-cosmetic surgery Polysporin, nose plasters or wrap-around dark glasses.

In Brentwood, there are no gargantuan multi-anchor malls. There is, however, a minimall at the corner of Barrington and San Vicente that sells Francis Bacon lithographs; on the berm, where most other malls might have placed anti-vandalism lighting systems, there sits a row of small Henry Moores.

From Brentwood's inception at the turn of this century, (there are no known records of how its name came about—it emerged *ex vacuo* in 1907) retail always has been seen as a land-value detractor. By contrast, country clubs, poignant and out of date as they may seem, have always been viewed as land-value enhancers.

At Hamburger Hamlet, next to the Henry Moore-sculptured minimall, a NASA retiree boasts of having had ten responses to an ad in the local paper asking for "an intelligent, sociologically aware" woman.

Brentwood is comprised of smaller, mallishly named neighborhoods—Westridge, Kenter Canyon, San Vicente Park, Brentwood Heights, Crestwood, Brentwood Park, Westgate, Brentwood Terrace, Mountaingate. Most of these are ruled by homeowners associations, which enforce, to the best of their ability, rules and regulations that will keep their neighborhoods from going "downhill." Consequently, much of Brentwood is without sidewalks. (Drifters!)

Brentwood's main streets are Sunset (an east/west corridor), Bundy (a north/south corridor and Nicole Brown Simpson's street) and the somewhat retail thoroughfares of San Vicente, Wilshire, Barrington.

Message board at the Westward Ho Market, near the corner of Barrington and San Vicente:

"Effective personal protection. Easy to use. Better than mace or pepper spray. Cannot be used against you. (310) 207-XXXX."

"Benedict Canyon house for rent. 4-bd., hdwd. floors, quiet patio, 2-car garage. $1,800/month."

"Westec patrol officer seeks guest house for rent."

[Various index cards touting home computer training, home security systems and pizza ovens.]

"1976 Porsche 911S Targa. $10,000."

One has a hunch that in 1964 the same billboard displayed index cards offering dance lessons, free kittens and piano lessons.

Display advertising in the *Brentwood News*:

CPAs
law firms
picnic baskets
gem appraisals
cellular phones
local Cartier dealer
Glendale Federal Bank
electronic security systems
Mountaingate Country Club
Mercedes repair specialists
chronic fatigue syndrome counseling
ArmorCoat anti-earthquake window glass
post-earthquake stress counseling seminars
seismically reinforced document storehouses
background investigations and asset searches
tummy- and butt-specific aerobic reduction classes
separation, re-divorce, custody, visitation, paternity and property division legal specialists

---

Brentwood gives the impression of a 1970s utopia—one with a fiercely protected secret at its core. Brentwood, like Palm Springs, offers a version of an alternative future that might have occurred had certain factors not continued unchecked. And it is a future that daily seems less probable.

Brentwood also possesses an air of exile: Bermuda during the 1940s; the Duke of Windsor half-crazed with boredom. During its early years, it was a suburb heavily engaged in Anglophilia.

Brentwood generates a mood—a mood that arises, I suspect, from the difference between what Brentwood posits itself as being (a secular nirvana—"better living through sex, money, fame and infrastructure") and what the suburb actually is. One receives the distinct aura of a municipality embodying secularism in crisis. And a part of the crisis of secularity seems to stem from a crisis in our cultural concept of "fame," "the body" and the way we dream of leading our lives.

The twin towers of the ABC Entertainment Complex at Century City are five miles away down Santa Monica Boulevard. The ocean's presence, combined with the canyons of the Santa Monica mountain range, at least loans Brentwood a feeling of place-ishness.

Lower Brentwood, or, rather, the lower part of Brentwood below San Vicente (referred to by a local youngster as "Nieder Brentwald"), is a mishmash of higher-density rental units, war-bride bungalows, Los Angeles

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

generica in the style of Ed Ruscha's mid-1960s paintings and Spanish bungalows, where the shielding trees out front died long ago and were never replaced, thus overexposing the structures to daily solar flare and lowering their land values in the extreme.

The housing density is far higher in this portion of Brentwood: three-story rental and condo units, most of them toting vacancy signs, all of them designed in the usual clutter of styles, predominantly DesiLu Moderne, 101-Dalmatians-Mansard, Orange-County-1986-Mission and Anaheim-Motel.

The neighborhood's plantings are exotic yet not rare—Waikiki plants: hibiscus, bougainvillea and banana. It is a neighborhood of $900-range renters with nice cars—aspiring actors, screenwriters, models and creative types mixed with pensioners. Lower Brentwood's range of reasonably affordable accommodations means that bodyworking men and women can assume night jobs, reserving their days for auditions and the gym. This is the source from which Brentwood's sexually charged party mix springs—from its midday and nighttime soap opera ecology.

Brentwood's "underside" is by no means impoverished, but it is certainly several cuts below what lies on the other side of San Vicente and above Sunset. It is into this neighborhood that Nicole Brown Simpson landed after her divorce, in a $650,000 condo near the noisy southwest corner of Bundy Drive and Dorothy Street, in a condo that would cost maybe $350,000 were it in most other suburbs of the city.

One 20-year-old Brentwood resident who grew up in Brentwood Heights (above Sunset in a house located halfway between the Monroe and Brown Simpson houses) calls "Nieder Brentwald" a divorcée ghetto. Three of his best friends from high school had parents who divorced, and all three mothers ended up "in the ghetto. Only my own mother [also a divorcée] got to keep the house. She's the exception."

Brentwood is technically the twelve-step program capital of the planet. Every Wednesday between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. the University Synagogue at the corner of Sunset and Saltair hosts the world's largest weekly Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, with 1,100 attendees.

Though held in a synagogue, it is important to remember that A.A. is nondenominational. It does, however, accept a "higher power." Secular nirvana.

Driving through Westwood Village en route to Brentwood, amid a Persepolis of dental-clean skyscrapers, a friend driving the car proudly proclaims, "See all these buildings? Full of shrinks. Every single one of them. Ain't that great?"

There is a blurring of denominations and attitudes in Brentwood. At one point in the mid-'80s, Christians and Jews shared the same church buildings in Brentwood and nearby Santa Monica and Mar Vista. Indoor crosses were covered up for the Jewish services; Torah scrolls were stored in a movable ark.

Brentwood's mood is Noir, that particularly L.A. phenomenon. One definition of Noir (again, from Mike Davis's *City of Quartz*) is of "the moral phenomenology of the depraved or ruined middle classes."

Church tally.

Jewish: 4; Christian: 2; Christian Science: 2.

On Sunday mornings at Bel Air Presbyterian on Mulholland Drive, the other side of the street from Brentwood's northern edge, white-gloved, tan-shirted, brown-panted LAPD officers guide the traffic in and around the church. Infrastructure meets the transcendental.

Psychology Today, July/August cover story: "On the Road to Happiness—What It Is, Who Has It, and How To Get There."

Reports Ed Diener, Ph.D., U. of Illinois, "Put simply, frequent positive experiences are both necessary and sufficient to produce the state we call happiness, whereas *random* [my italics] intense experiences are not."

John Reich, Ph.D., Arizona State, says, "Winning a lottery may make you happy for a short while, but a *random* [my italics] event, occurring without input, will not create long-term happiness.

Both doctors demonize randomness, in flagrant defiance of the lifestyle of Brentwood's rental class, which spends the sunlight hours buffing, gigoloing, dealing, auditioning—whatever—all in order to garner the magic scratch 'n' win lottery ticket of media fame.

Later, reference is made to Vice President Al Gore's statement that "the accumulation of material goods is at an all-time high, but so is the number of people who feel emptiness in their lives."

Overheard:

A: What is the macramé of the 1990s?
B: Whadja mean?
A: Where are people putting all of the energy they used to put into making macramé wall hangings?
B: That's easy—makeovers.

Brentwood is a city that has never thought of itself as even existing. That is part of its charm. Brentwood has no published written history as do neighboring Malibu, Pacific Palisades, Westwood (the municipal egg containing the yolk of UCLA), Bel Air and Beverly Hills. Its entire paper archives fit snugly in a cardboard Kinko's box.

From *We Will Always Live in Beverly Hills* by Ned Wynn:

> He looked at me and made a face. "Is your dad Van Johnson or not?" he demanded.
>
> "He's my stepfather," I said. "Keenan Wynn's my father." I waited for the awe, the homage.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Never heard of that guy. My sister's big on movie stars, but I don't care about them one iota. They're all phonies, anyway, not real people." I felt my skin prickle.

"They are so real," I said.

"Sure they are," he said. I swallowed and my eyes started to sting.

"My dad is real," I choked. "He lives in Brentwood."

Infrastructure: this is a key.

Imagine viewing North America as *terra virginea*—almost utterly uninhabited as it was four centuries ago. A continent of shelves and ridges and deltas and arroyos and plains. The least likely place for a city would be Los Angeles, located nowhere, with nothing.

One must never overlook the fact that Los Angeles is an entirely manufactured city assembled piece by piece beginning in the 1910s and 1920s—the Henry Ford boom years. Los Angeles without sci-fi caliber infrastructure is not only unimaginable but impossible. Located nowhere, and lacking any inherent sense of "thereness." L.A. is like Xerox paper—it becomes whatever is copied on it.

Freeways, their signage, aqueducts, graveyards, electrical grids and telephone poles—the sexy enormity of these infrastructural intrusions is often a visitor's largest takeaway memory of the place. How many grids overlap other grids? Aqueducts, power lines, freeways, signage....

And as the city's economy goes post-industrial, its psychic ecology reacts correspondingly.

The dream of Arcadian livability for Brentwood was generated by a Canadian from New Brunswick, Robert C. Gillis, who led a group that in 1904 purchased what is now Brentwood and much of Santa Monica and Pacific Palisades. It was Gillis who ensured tree-lined boulevards and rigid deed restrictions to maintain the area's livability in an era of no restrictions. Automobile travel was eagerly fostered with oiled roads, which were paved as soon as possible.

Brentwood's infrastructure is seamless. Its invisibility and fail-proofness all add to the place's utopian claims.

In Brentwood, infrastructure is present precisely through its *lack* of presence. A strong component of Brentwood's identity is that the suburb acts as a temporary respite from the infrastructural omnipresence of Los Angeles. Brentwood was designed to emulate the country—seen as a retreat from a too-rapidly growing city with ample setbacks of houses and massive plantings of trees to ensure relief.

Entering Brentwood is like reading a book in which the capitalization, periods and commas suddenly vanish. It is a suburb in denial of technology.

"A butterfly should be able to fly through any properly kept tree" is the local axiom. Trees are a huge issue in this community.

Trees separate the rich from the poor and sustain a bucolic illusion, which in turn sustains land values, masking the worst of the suburb's architecture as well as enhancing some of the best. Most important, trees mask the power poles, transformer boxes and all other infrastructural blights.

Most trees are maintained with due precision: Bower Wattle, Peppermint Tree, Bunya-Bunya, Avocado, Carrot Wood, California Pepper, Loquat, Weeping Chinese Banyan, Jacaranda, New Zealand Tea Tree, Olive, Victorian Box and Lemonade Berry. Cumulatively, they add up to one meaning: heaven can be manufactured.

But trees, like the citizens of Brentwood, are facing the problems of Los Angeles—"the encroacher." Trees regularly die due to heavy construction, grade changes, over-watering, strangling ivy, smog, drought. There are limits to how much change can be absorbed.

And the plants! Brentwood nurtures an almost infinite array of plantings: grassy low bulrush, chive, Shamrock, spinach-like Acanthus, succulent Stonecrop and Houseleek, feathery Gru-gru palms, flowered Choreopsis and the omnipresent Delft-blue Lily-of-the-Nile such as those that lined Nicole Brown Simpson's condominium walkway. Technically called agapanthus, they are at their height in July and August.

Infrastructure highlight: Monday nights, garbage night, when tight clusters of Wedgwood blue and gunmetal gray Rubbermaid "Bruiser" thirty-two-gallon wheeled refuse containers huddle at the foot of each driveway. Some households have up to eighteen containers. There are also City of Los Angeles recycling containers: red for metal; yellow for glass.

Infrastructural highlights of Brentwood and Brentwood Park (neighborhood of O.J. Simpson):

1907: ads in *The Los Angeles Times* extol Brentwood's virtues.

1922: Brentwood's lands are only one-quarter sold; the firm of Shipley, Harrell and Trapp takes over.

1942: Brentwood Park Homeowners Association formed in response to the threat of subdivision and lowering land values.

1963: Lot subdivisions limited to 20,000 square feet.

1970: Caesar Romero, actor, and June Lockhart, actress, shear apart a ribbon, inaugurating a new post office at 137 Barrington Place. Romero wears his trademark cravat and a carnation in his vest; Lockhart dons a pre-wedge/post-pixie hairdo and wears an A-line linen dress in the style of Oleg Cassini.

1975: There is a momentary burst of fear when San Vicente Boulevard is possibly to be renamed a highway.

1977: Further panic when plans for a freeway along Sunset, straight through the center of Brentwood, are proposed. Plan eventually killed by coalition of homeowners associations and environmental groups.

1978: Vote among Park Homeowners Association members allows, by a narrow margin, a limit of two on-location film shoots per residence per year.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1980: Mace instruction classes formed.
1984: Mailing sent out on how to conceal trash cans.
1985: Underground wiring is left as a block-by-block decision.
1990: General survey held regarding "undergrounding" of utility wires.
1991: Water rationing.
1991: Leaf-blower noise limited to sixty-five decibels.
1993: Magnetic fields in nearby Kenter Canyon are halved by the Department of Water and Power owing to a possible leukemia health risk.

The local newspaper, the *Brentwood News*, is a puree of local chitchat and real estate-driven editorial. It follows Brentwood's home sales minutiae with seemingly pornographic fidelity.

Real estate is the driving force of conversation in Brentwood. Subdivision maps and lots resembling cross-cut vacuoles of loofah sponges are a recurring civic visual motif—in newspapers, drawn on bar napkins and faxed among neighbors from house to house.

Most residential structures were built between 1950 and 1979. Fewer than 10 percent have been built since then. Most of the houses built in the Brentwood Hills subdivision were built in the 1960s and 1970s by Art Linkletter.

The "ranch-style house" was invented in Brentwood, in Sullivan Canyon, by Clifford May.

May tried to blur the definition of the inside and the outside. The prominent fireplace of wood and stone is a dominant theme. The use of tiling inside and outside the house minimizes indoor/outdoor distinctions; all rooms look outward, sliding glass doors and skylights connect the two realms.

May's was an aesthetic idealized and mass-produced in the post-World War II boom. Eventually his vision found its way into the popular consciousness of generations raised in Maysian subdivisions and in front of "Bewitched" episodes, where magic occurred within a May construct.

May's ideas taught Americans to embrace "California." Above all, May's work offers a subtle architectural metaphor for a self undergoing a blurring of where the body ends and where the world begins.

A drive through any portion of Brentwood reveals a chocolate box of architectural styles:
MGM-colonial-scandalbox
San-Diego-public-school-system-post-and-beam
Marcus-Welby-sonorous-Tudor (the Simpson house)
1941-white-stucco-Pearl-Harbor's-just-been-bombed-cocktail-darling?
Doris-Day's-in-the-house-holding-a-lobster-claw-and-dish-of-melted-butter-Cape-Cod
The-future-whoosh!-Apollo-17
Kim-Novak's-love-nest-ranchero.

Some houses have been torn down and rebuilt so often there's no knowing what was ever built there originally. Piles of broken brick and mortar append the sidewalk of almost every street; plywood husks of homes in mid-construction sit inside holes of soil the color of toasted rose petals.

On September 14, 1993, Los Angeles City Council passed the Hillside Ordinance by an 11-to-2 vote preventing the "mansionization," or the creation of what is known in other cities as "monster houses," by land developers who, throughout the 1980s, would tear down smaller houses, carefully examine local building codes and then build the largest possible structure legally allowed on the same property. The not-often-pleasing-to-neighbors result was then flipped for a fat profit.

One particularly popular style for these new "monster houses" is what one might call the "San-Fernando-Valley-minimall": a fevered dream of the Mediterranean, a house where Barbie might live—hugely overpedimented, grossly and arrogantly disproportionate to all surrounding structures, cake-frosted with stucco and lacking only Plexiglas signage.

Monsters.

In the 1960s monsters were googly-eyed, Rat Fink, Revell model chummy things—anonymously designed folkloric terror and lovable at the core: Incredible Edibles; Wacky Packs; Herman Munster. But what is our vision of monsters now? There no longer seems to be friendliness attached to them; they are now merely out to kill (just visit any video rental shop)—either that or they're out to—*shiver*—devalue our neighborhoods.

If the monsters we create as a culture reflect our deepest terrors temporarily focused into one entity—Frankenstein, killer robots, pod people—then with the monster house, Brentwood has spawned monsters of a new toughness, durability and sublimity.

The Hillside Ordinance might then be likened to Count Chocula—something given to children to help them objectify and reduce their fears, to make them feel as though they are really in charge.

To hinder the "lookie-loos," thru traffic is blocked on both sides of Dorothy Street, perpendicular to Bundy Drive. An LAPD officer beside his motorcycle keeps traffic flowing.

The front of the alleyway in which the bodies of Brown Simpson and Ronald Lyle Goldman were found has been screened off by a dozen or so dwarf maples still inside their black nursery tubs. It is further hidden by previous plantings of Australian tree ferns and Lilies-of-the-Nile.

Signs put up by agitated neighbors saying "GET A LIFE" and "GO HOME THERE IS NOTHING 2 SEE" have been taken down. By August 4, late afternoon traffic no longer concertinas to a grind, as it did in the initial sensationalist frenzy. But it still slows down.

There are a few joggers and dog-walkers—Brentwood's only two species of residential pedestrian—and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

all are wearing Walkmans.

It was a dog-walker who first found the murdered bodies.

The cul-de-sac behind Marilyn Monroe's old house at 12305 Fifth Helena, but a stone's throw from the old house of Raymond Chandler, is silent. There are desiccated lemons strewn on gravel, bird of paradise clippings in the trash bin, a Washingtonia palm with a frazzled, untrimmed skirt, gardeners' pickup trucks, an air conditioning company van and day lilies.

The emphasis on the body beautiful is beyond a cliché in California, and its hyperbolic pursuit in Brentwood is taken as an a priori assumption for our purposes here. To appear "well maintained" is, of course, a beyond-discussion ultradesirable West Coast pursuit—firm, symmetrical blemish-free bodies. As the magazine for *The Sunday Times of London* stated, California represents the "democratization of beauty."

Yet rarely, if ever, is the question asked of the body-obsessed, "Just what is it you expect to get from your body? What is it you want your body to do for you that it isn't doing for you right now?"

Gyms, in general, are notorious cash points for steroids and cocaine. It is rare to encounter a gym rat—male or female—without pronounced psychological difficulties.

After a while one becomes used to the Brentwood notion of the superior body and superior, invisible municipal infrastructure as well as its implicit attitude that any hierarchy of ideas is corny.

After a certain amount of exposure to the suburb, tears elicit only fear, not sympathy ... *are you unglued? Stop crying*. After a while, people from elsewhere seem naïve and unarmored. One drives through Pennsylvania, for example, and sees freeway overpasses obviously not up to any State of California seismic code and wonders, "What's going through their minds—don't they *know?*"

From *Dino*, a biography of Dean Martin by Nick Tosches:

> Nineteen-fucking-eighty. He had outlived Crosby. He outlived Elvis. He had outlived Terry's Wonder Dogs. He would outlive them all. He had discovered the secret of happiness.
>
> "How's it going?" someone asked him at the Riviera Country Club one day.
>
> "Beautiful," he said. "It's great. I wake up every morning. Massive bowel movement. The Mexican maid makes me some breakfast. Down to the club here. At least nine holes. A nice lunch. Go home, sit by the T.V. The Mexican maid makes me a nice dinner. A few drinks. Go to bed. Wake up the next morning. Another massive bowel movement. Beautiful. This is my life."

Thirteen years later Martin is a walking corpse, drinking himself into the grave nightly at Dan Tanna's on Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood. For Martin, all narrative rationales have imploded. What's the point?

Nicole Brown Simpson was a body fanatic, 5' 8", 125 pounds; she was a homecoming queen in Dana Point, California; she jogged three miles a day; she ate only low/no fat food and attended gyms regularly.

Like Monroe, Nicole Brown Simpson was intensely aware of her power over men, her ability to pick and choose partners as she pleased. Her white Ferrari, won in her October 1992 divorce case with Simpson, had vanity plates reading L84AD8 ("late for a date"). Those spurned by Brown Simpson's attentions grudgingly admit to her almost otherworldly desirability and bare her no ill will. "She had that well maintained look," was one comment.

Brentwood is not a place where one establishes a dynastic root. It is not a homestead suburb—North American suburbs rarely are—places where people expect their children to inherit the family Tara. Traditionally people came to Brentwood to raise families in California's übersuburb, with the common end scenario being divorce, atomization, property divestiture and a move onward. This is the way it works in suburbs. Brentwood is no exception: the kids grow up and leave, the parents move to Newport or Santa Barbara or Connecticut.

Monroe, empty child of Los Angeles, blank screen, according to Norman Mailer, "free of history." One local guidebook lists twenty-three separate addresses within Los Angeles where Monroe had lived since her birth.

Monroe, not an accumulator by nature, lived in a blazing white, L-shaped red-tiled Spanish-style house furnished casually with chairs and benches; serape blankets; "Hacienda" '50s motel-type lamps, a small hi-fi in a suitcase with a folding chair (surfaced in knotty pine) next to it.

Her bedroom was a disaster—teenagers have been grounded for less. Purses and bags heaped against a wall. Papers, scripts, pill bottles everywhere.

Honorary Mayors of Brentwood (8- by 10-inch glossies on view at the First Interstate Bank, 11836 San Vicente):

1968: Lloyd Nolan
1970: Fred MacMurray
1971: Phyllis Diller
1974: Lorne Greene
1976: Sandy Duncan
1978: John Forsythe
1981: Tony Franciosa
1985: Mark Harmon
1986: John Saxon
1992: Sally Struthers

One factor that sets us apart from all other animals is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that our lives need to be stories—narratives—and that when our stories vanish we feel lost, dangerous, out of control and susceptible to the forces for randomness. I call the process whereby one loses one's life-story "denarration."

Denarration is the technical way of saying "not having a life."

"Brad doesn't have a life"; "Brad is denarrated."

Until recently, culture provided us with all the components essential for the forging identity. These components included: religion, family, ideology, class strata, geography, politics and a sense of living within a historic continuum.

Suddenly, around ten years ago, with the deluge of electronic and information media, these stencils within which we trace our lives began to vanish—particularly on the West Coast. It became possible to be alive yet have no religion, no family connections, no ideology, no sense of class location, no politics and no sense of history. Denarrated.

In a low-information environment—pre-T.V., etc.—relationships were the only form of entertainment available. Now we have methods of information linkage and control—ranging from phone answering machines to the Internet—that mediate relationships to the extent that corporeal interaction is now beside the point. As a result, the internal dialogue has been accelerated to whole new planes as regularized daily contact has become an obsolete indulgence.

The West Coast continues to be a laboratory of denarration. The vacuum of nothingness forces the individual to either daily reinvent himself or perish. Therefore it should come as no surprise that, sunny weather aside, Hollywood and the dream-creation apparatus of the twentieth century should locate itself in the most geographically blank of all planetary locales.

Q: Who are you this week? This year?

Denarration seems to be the inevitable end-product of information supersaturation, and because it appears to be an inevitable condition, like a hurricane off the Florida coast, it is not on the moral spectrum.

Smugly non-denarrated locales such as Europe, now swamped by media technology long ago taken for granted in North America, now look to us for answers as to how to cope with the sensation of personal storylessness. The cautionary tales of Brentwood, where total denarration has been in full swing since the early 1960s (Marilyn), offer guidance.

Excerpt from a note written by Simpson prior to his San Diego Freeway chase:

"Please think of the real O.J. and not this lost person."

To sentimentalize the mid-twentieth-century notion of life seems at worst unproductive. Buying into an untenable 1950s narrative of what "life" is supposed to be can only lead to useless and uncreative expenditures of energy. How are we to know that all of these people with "no lives" aren't really on the new frontier of human sentience and perception?

In Brentwood one sees a certain blankness in the eyes you meet on the street. It is as if personal histories—narratives—have been cashed in like frequent flyer points that went toward unsuccessful vacations.

Brentwood is a region of Los Angeles that speaks eloquently of the amorality of cash. Money is neither moral nor immoral—it is simply an invention, like the toaster or the zero. This always comes as a shock to Brentwood's first- or second-generation, upwardly mobile, brood-spawning wealth. What seems to leave its inhabitants almost naïvely stunned is the emptiness of the money once it arrives; its inherent disconnection to morality.

Fame and money do little to add storyline to one's life. This is, since biblical times, the irony of human pursuit—and a torpid punchline enacted daily amid Brentwood's salons, cafés and spotlessly clean, freshly be-flowered households.

If life is a car traveling down the road at 55 mph, money and fame will change the color of the car, but it won't change its speed or its direction. It is interesting to note that most entertainment whiz kids buy and sell their red Ferraris within a year; they quickly convert to gray Audis and Lexuses and stay with those brands thereafter.

There is a sadness. When asked what they want nowadays, young people, with alarming frequency, ask for fame or money—wishing non-linearity and denarration upon themselves.

Brentwood is a suburb of indeterminate verdicts and unclear death. Murders aren't solved here—Monroe, Brown Simpson, the Menendez brothers in nearby Beverly Hills—their investigations simply drag on until amnesia sedates any enthusiasm for a full solution.

In the end, it was *the freeway* that captured the world's imagination—Simpson's profound, superb monopolization of the Los Angeles freeway system—his monopolization of those sturdy hot white ribbons that lead us off to a dream of something better. Like a king, he seized these paths, reminding the world that the paths still exist, that we still *do* dream—of cities where there is still no past and where the future remains entirely unwritten, of cities where there are grassy canyons and water glazed by the sun into gold, of a billion butterflies floating through a billion trees, of water piped in from heaven and where there are limitless wide white freeways to lead us off into infinity.

Overheard at *Mezzaluna*: "They've stopped inventing supermodels." •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

French Connections

The hero of **Queen Margot** (Miramax) is the cinematographer, Phillipe Rousselot, whose mastery has been clear ever since *Diva* (1982) and *Thérèse* (1986). In this new film, built around the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre of Huguenots in 1572, he visualizes the work as if it were Meyerbeer's opera *Les Huguenots*, being performed in a fantastical theater where every kind of setting is magically possible but where theatricality rules no matter how veristic the detail.

Queen Margot begins with close-ups of faces and of torches being borne between them and us. The moment is hot, dynamic. Soon comes a huge shot of the wedding of Margot and Henri of Navarre; it looks as if the curtain had just risen on this scene at the Met. (The Met should live so long.) Then there are hunting episodes, with horsemen making their way through a forest as the camera peers up at them toward a sky that spills pearly light. These are just a few samples of Rousselot's lyric-dramatic talent.

Next in honor is Moidele Bickel, the costume designer, famous in European theater and opera but known in film only for her work in Rohmer's great *Marquise of O*. Her art is not only resplendent, it underscores a historical cruelty. It makes us realize, yet again, that tailors and dressmakers *of that time*, chiefs in their professions, had chosen textiles and ornaments, had cut and stitched for months, knowing in advance that their work would be used only briefly, then cast aside. "The intertissued robe of gold and pearl" doesn't matter much to Henry V of England, nor does it to these French nobles. Bickel's fine work is at least preserved on film, but she reminds us of artistry at the service of whim.

The theatricality in the work of Rousselot and Bickel is used by the director, Patrice Chéreau, somewhat oddly—for him. Chéreau (who, too, is much more active in European theater and opera than in film) is known as an avant-garde iconoclast. At Bayreuth, from 1976 to 1980, he produced a *Ring* that shook many viewers with its political coloration. He chose to film this Dumas derivative, which he helped to adapt, because it is about the horrors of religious intolerance; but the "lesson" is considerably obscured by the apparatus of melodrama that he applies. No directing could be less avant-garde.

Obviously he couldn't do to the historical *Margot* what he did to the mythological *Ring*—in terms of modernization—but he might have opted for less heavy breathing, fewer baleful glances, more exploration of character. Chéreau makes us feel that Dumas would recognize this treatment of his novel as merely another way of reveling in popular theater.

It only remains to note that the film's composer, Goran Bregovic, has listened carefully to Orff's *Carmina Burana* and then we can proceed to the story. Not in detail: it's a bit difficult to follow the plot even in the film. Catherine de Medici, the Catholic queen mother of France, has arranged for the marriage of her daughter Marguerite (Margot) to the Protestant Henri, and Catherine plans the murder of all the Protestants who come to Paris for the wedding. She succeeds pretty well. (The film omits the extent of the scheme—many Protestants were murdered in other French cities that day—and the fact that Pope Gregory XIII ordered a *Te Deum* to celebrate the killings.)

Margot has been sexually free and continues so: she begins an affair with a Protestant lord on her wedding night. After much hugger-mugger—in boudoirs, corridors, narrow streets, great halls and courtyards—after some religious conversion and reconversion, it all ends with suggested reconciliation.

Chéreau says that he likes working in film because, unlike the theater, he can stay close to actors' faces. We'd have known this even if he hadn't said so. I've rarely seen more steamy close-ups unsupported by credible drama. Isabelle Adjani, who plays Margot, is lovely and can act, but here she abuses her talent. She is forced to supply all kinds of faces disconnected from dramatic conviction. It's as if she had made a series of isolated screen tests.

Daniel Auteuil has a better role as her cynical, suspicious husband, and Virna Lisi continuously fights hamminess as the arachnidan Catherine. *The* performance for me is by the beloved Jean-Claude Brialy, now grizzled, as the proud Protestant Admiral Coligny. When he is murdered, early in the film, the whole snorting, sweating enterprise dwindles in interest.

Red (Miramax) is highly enjoyable. This is almost a daring comment, plebeian

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Hoop Dreams. *This documentary about the high school years of two black basketball aspirants reveals a great deal about their world. Sympathetic and full. (Reviewed 10/17/94)* **Ladybird Ladybird.** *Ken Loach's latest film—about an unmarried London mother's fights to keep her children—is unsentimental but moving, unreservedly honest. (12/12/94)* **Pulp Fiction.** *Quentin Tarantino's much-hyped crime flick is worth some hype. He has rummaged through old crime thrillers and, often humorously, refurbished what he came up with. (11/14/94)* **Vanya on 42nd Street.** *A group of actors gathers in an abandoned Times Square theater for a run-through of "Uncle Vanya" and, under André Gregory's direction, provides a feast of beautiful acting. (11/7/94)* **—SK**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and inadequate, because of the director's highfalutin aesthetic stances and the critical hoopla surrounding them. Krzysztof Kieslowski is a Pole who first drew raptures with *Decalogue*, a ten-part work made for Polish T.V. and then shown elsewhere. (I've seen only one of the ten, which was, in a familiar gritty middle-European way, O.K.) He has since done a lot of work outside Poland, some of it vacuously pretentious.

The Double Life of Véronique, about two physically identical young women, one French and one Polish, never achieved the metaphysical plane that the director and others claimed for it. He then announced a trio to be based on the three colors of the French flag. *Blue* was a nearly suffocating series of poses and attitudes about a composer's young widow and the man who finishes her husband's unfinished symphony. *White*, however, was a sinewy comedy about a Polish hairdresser, his troubled marriage in Paris and its resolution in Warsaw. But neither of these pictures, the unbearable first and the spry second, had much to do with the "liberty" and "equality" that their titles represent in the French flag.

Now comes *Red*, which has equally little to do with the "fraternity" in the tricolor. But, if we disregard its supposed schematic obligation, it's a wistful, clever, engaging tale. Irène Jacob (who played the two Véroniques) is a University of Geneva student who accidentally hits a dog with her car. She carries it to its owner, a solitary, embittered, retired judge, Jean-Louis Trintignant. Jacob is having troubles of the heart; Trintignant, we learn, has not yet recovered from such troubles of long ago. Between these two, a tacit father-daughter affection grows. Neither of them says so, but her visits and his grudging reception testify to it. It has subtle charm.

Around their story is woven another story, a love affair, unconnected except that the two people's homes are in the neighborhoods where Jacob and Trintignant live. Their story, which has some parallels to the inner story, entails shock and disappointment, too. The ending settles everything, through an accident shown to be as arbitrary as falling in or out of love.

Kieslowski handles it all with velvet-gloved firmness and with a neatness that is ironic. His cast is excellent. In fact, if there were some touch of violence in *Red*, it would be equivalent to upper-range Chabrol. The hyperbolic praise that Kieslowski has drawn seems uncalled for. Comparison with Chabrol is compliment enough.

Dept. of Detection. Several readers have complained about my complaint about *Pulp Fiction*—that Bruce Willis, after he kills the hit man, wipes his prints off the gun but then grabs the doorknob. Correspondents point out that this was Willis's apartment. Yes, but he leaves his prints on top of the hit man's, which means of course that he was there after the murder. •

Hill, Thomas and the dirt on everybody.

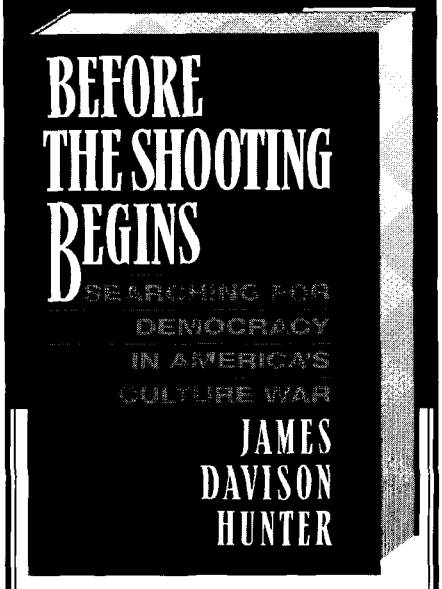
Confirmations

By Jeffrey Rosen

Three years after their traumatic conclusion, the confirmation hearings of Clarence Thomas continue to corrode the judgment and to degrade the reputation of virtually everyone they touch. Justice Thomas, who had been silently nursing his resentments, has abandoned the dignity of silence by unburdening himself to his friend John Danforth. The Oprah-izing of the Supreme Court is now complete. The formerly sensible Danforth has written a painfully exhibitionistic book in which he embarrasses himself, as well as Justice Thomas, by obsessively enumerating his crazed efforts to destroy his friend's accuser at all cost.

In the same self-destructive spirit, the prim Anita Hill, whose most convincing quality had been her ambivalence about the limelight, has accepted a million-dollar advance to write the book about her ordeal that she swore before Congress she had no interest in writing. And Jane Mayer and Jill Abramson, after two years of meticulous research, are not content with their impressive achievement of clinching the case that Thomas lied to Congress as convincingly as the case can be clinched. They proceed to lionize Hill and to demonize Thomas in a way that sometimes reduces both of them to caricatures. ("Where abandon-

"OFFERS A WELCOME REPRIEVE FROM THE IDEOLOGICAL BATTLEGROUND."
—Madeleine M. Kunin, *New York Times Book Review*



Because a host of public issues — abortion, sexual harassment, homosexuality — are at the very center of cultural conflict today, the central political question of our time is how to find a working agreement on the common good in a society as fractured and contentious as ours.

"A lucid guide to understanding the war in which, like it or not, we are embroiled, and a bountiful source of fact and analysis for prosecuting it more effectively."
—Richard John Neuhaus, *National Review*

"A fascinating book about the prospects for our democracy."
—*Wall Street Journal*

"Offers a voice of reason and an urgent plea for democratic dialogue. Whether we are on the far left, the far right or — more likely — in the ambivalent middle, we need to learn from this book."
—Robert Wuthnow, author of *God and Mammon in America*

At all bookstores

THE FREE PRESS
A Division of Simon & Schuster

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ment and rejection marked Thomas's earliest memories, Hill's were formed in the heart of a strong, proud and very much intact family....") And by wallowing in Thomas's innocent weakness for adult entertainment, Mayer and Abramson cheapen their otherwise responsible narrative, which seems hard to distinguish, in this respect, from the leering of their journalistic antagonist, David Brock.

To borrow a phrase from the Court's voting rights jurisprudence, these books are political pornography, and they are deliriously entertaining as a result. But aside from illicit thrills, what can they teach us about the character and ideas of Clarence Thomas? Although both books focus on Anita Hill's accusations, they suggest in different ways that Thomas's anger, self-pity and sense of persecution preceded the sexual harassment charges; and the charges, when they came, only exacerbated personal and intellectual insecurities that Thomas displayed in his previous career. And so the pathologies of the Thomas nomination contain few lessons about the confirmation process in general, except that the shortcomings of a weak and unstable candidate are likely to be magnified beyond everyone's wildest nightmares. In spite of themselves, however, both books should generate sympathy for Thomas. For whatever sins he has committed, he can't possibly deserve the indignities that he has suffered at the hands of his enemies and his friends.

Although it purports to be "a story of friendship and faith," John Danforth's defense of Thomas is even more of a blow to the justice's reputation than Mayer and Abramson's full-frontal attack. The question that comes to mind as one reads *Resurrection* with an increasingly slack jaw is: What on earth were Danforth and Thomas thinking? The spectacle of a sitting Supreme Court justice lashing out vindictively against his enemies is such a startling lapse of taste that one cringes at every outburst.

In Danforth's apologia, we are vouchsafed Thomas's response when friends asked whether he was attracted to Anita Hill: "She wasn't attractive at all, and she had bad breath." And Thomas is no more gracious about the Senate and the press: "I felt a disdain for the committee. They looked like petty thieves sitting up there.... I felt as though the people in the press gallery were a cabal. They were evil people who conspired in my lynching and were going to destroy our country." And as the nominee, glowering in his bath, learns that he has finally been confirmed as the 106th justice of the Supreme Court, Danforth is there to supply Thomas's reaction: "He was glad that the interest groups that opposed him were not rewarded for their efforts with victory, and he believed that God had made it clear that his confirmation was God's will."

As a meltdown of judgment, Thomas's decision to unbutton himself to Danforth ranks with his decision to officiate over the marriage of Rush Limbaugh in his own home, or to appear on the cover of *People* magazine for an article accompanied by pictures of Thomas and his wife snuggling on a couch, reading Scripture and cursing liberal interest groups. ("Clarence will give everyone a fair day in court. But I feel he doesn't owe any of the groups who opposed him anything," said Ginni Thomas darkly.) As for Danforth, does he really think he has served his friend's interests by exposing him so nakedly? "There are matters that should remain private between a husband and a wife—certainly matters that are hard to include in a book about a good man who is a friend," writes Danforth. "That a future justice of the Supreme Court was writhing on the floor is awful enough to tell."

Strange Justice:
The Selling of Clarence Thomas
by Jane Mayer and Jill Abramson
(Houghton Mifflin, 406 pp., $24.95)

Resurrection:
The Confirmation of Clarence Thomas
by John C. Danforth
(Viking, 225 pp., $19.95)

The Complete Transcripts of the
Clarence Thomas-Anita Hill Hearings
edited by Anita Miller
(Academy Chicago Publishers, 480 pp., $22.95)

But tell it Danforth does, and with relish, adding the fact that the hearings reduced Thomas to vomiting ("I felt like throwing up.... I felt like someone had reached inside me and ripped out my insides"); uncontrollable fits of weeping ("Clarence was crying and hyperventilating.... For about fifteen minutes, Clarence was just wailing"); and quivering ("He was constantly rubbing his head, dropping his hands, twitching.... He would be switching his feet, knees. He would constantly be rubbing his head, rubbing his eyes. He didn't stop moving. He was in absolute, complete distress"). For good measure, Danforth pruriently reproduces Thomas's cries of agony while waiting to testify: "These people have destroyed my life. They have destroyed everything I have ever had. They have destroyed my family. They have ruined me. I have nothing left anymore." It's impossible to read this without feeling pity for Thomas; but the real pity is that his friend has stripped him of his last patches of dignity.

The most sensational revelations in Danforth's book have nothing to do with Hill. Even before the sexual harassment charges surfaced, the portrait of Thomas that emerges from Danforth's early chapters is a little unsettling: a paranoid, self-pitying and thin-skinned man who confuses political opposition with personal opposition at every turn. Thomas has often been called bitter and angry since the hearings ended; but it is a bit of a shock to learn just how bitter and angry he was before they began. "Beginning shortly after his nomination on July 1, Clarence Thomas had the strong feeling that someone was trying to kill him," Danforth writes. In Thomas's words: "The feeling is as though you're waiting in the wilderness for someone with guns to find you and kill you. And that's the way I felt all summer." Thomas recalls peering out through his windows at the decks of surrounding houses to see if anyone was trying to kill him. Long before Hill stepped forward, Thomas was unable to differentiate between physical death and the destruction of his reputation: "These people are going to try to kill me. I hadn't done anything to them, but they are going to try to kill me. And so I was always waiting to be killed. I mean literally waiting to be destroyed in some way."

What is Thomas so mortally afraid of? "The fear of being stalked and murdered may seem paranoid unless we consider the context," ventures Danforth. "Concern for physical survival was not new to a black male raised in the rural Georgia of the 1950s and 1960s." But many black Southerners have overcome great hardships and distinguished themselves in public life without being reduced to paranoid fantasies. Danforth also gives the strong impression that Thomas remains tormented and ashamed about some of his behavior in the past and feared exposure from the beginning. "I was petrified by having to go through the confirmation process and having to live through threats and having to live through people who are poring through files and documents with no purpose other than to destroy you as a person," Thomas recalled.

At the height of the Anita Hill agony, as Thomas was writhing on the floor, his wife noted that

> something was inside of him, physically, like there was this battle going on inside of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

him.... What it felt like is that Clarence still had some sin in his life and he had to get that out in order to be open to the Holy Spirit and that he had a vestige of sin, that he was in this furnace and God wasn't going to let him keep going without eliminating this vestige of sin.

Thomas's own recollection strikes a similarly guilty note: "I don't think that I had truly repented for the way I had conducted myself since 1968. In some sense, I felt that this punishment was being visited upon me.... Having to directly confront any indiscretion that I might have made or engaged in my life required me to become a better person." Whatever transpired between Thomas and Hill, *something* is weighing on the man's conscience.

Thomas "categorically" denied "in the strongest terms" every one of Anita Hill's allegations, leaving no room for doubt that one of them was lying. When the interviews in the Mayer and Abramson book are added to the existing record, it is hard not to accept their conclusion that the preponderance of the evidence favors Hill. Mayer and Abramson deserve real credit for removing the Thomas-Hill episode from the realm of unreason. With the publication of their book, rational readers should feel fairly confident that the basic facts of what transpired are no longer open to serious doubt. But to the degree that the book promises an exposé of "the selling of Clarence Thomas," it is perhaps less shocking than the subtitle suggests. In the realm of manipulation and exaggeration, both sides have plenty to answer for.

Without belaboring the numbing charges and countercharges, it may be useful to sift through the evidence as if it were part of an ordinary sexual harassment investigation. In its *Policy Guidance on Current Issues of Sexual Harassment*, prepared under Clarence Thomas's direction in 1988, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission offers the following hypothetical:

> Example—Charging Party (C.P.) alleges that her supervisor made unwelcome sexual advances toward her on frequent occasions while they were alone in his office. The supervisor denies this allegation. No one witnessed the alleged advances. C.P.'s inability to produce eyewitnesses to the harassment does not defeat her claim. The resolution will depend on the credibility of her allegations versus that of her supervisor's. Corroborating, credible evidence will establish her claim.... Her allegations would be further buttressed if other employees testified that the supervisor propositioned them as well.

Thomas's categorical denial is not unusual under the circumstances. According to the EEOC guidelines, "A general denial by the alleged harasser will carry little weight when it is contradicted by other evidence." Instead, investigators are encouraged to roam widely, interviewing anyone with whom the accuser discussed the incidents, questioning the accused and the accuser in detail and digging for corroborating evidence of any nature. "Testimony may be obtained from persons who observed the charging party's demeanor immediately after an alleged incident of harassment," says the EEOC manual.

With the EEOC's framework in mind, the inquiry seems relatively straightforward. During the hearings, Hill's account was supported by three friends in whom she had confided in 1982 and 1983, and who had observed her distress shortly after she claimed the disputed conversations with Thomas occurred: Susan Hoerchner, John Carr and Ellen Wells. (Another witness, Joel Paul, said Hill had confided in him in 1987.) Mayer and Abramson have discovered yet another corroborating witness, Bradley Mims, who chose to keep quiet during the hearings because he feared reprisals. He had met Hill at the beginning of 1982, in a night class for federal employees who wanted to improve their

What is "game theory" anyway? *Princeton wrote the book!*

Contributions to the Theory of Games
Volume 1 and Volume 2
Edited by H. W. Kuhn and A. W. Tucker

Volume 1 of this landmark work contains seminal contributions from J. F. Nash, 1994 Nobel Laureate in economics, as well as other path-breaking essays.

Volume 2 incorporates work by scholars throughout the world—the "founding family" of game theory.

Volume 1, Paper: $45.00 ISBN 0-691-07934-X
Volume 2, Cloth: $60.00 ISBN 0-691-07935-8

Theory of Games and Economic Behavior
John Von Neumann and Oskar Morgenstern

This is the book that started an entire discipline—one of the recognized classics in the development of game theory.

Paper: $24.95 ISBN 0-691-00362-9

Game Theory for Political Scientists
James D. Morrow

Here is the first comprehensive adaptation of contemporary game theory to political analysis.

Cloth: $35.00 ISBN 0-691-03430-3 *Due December 1994*

Game Theory for Applied Economists
Robert Gibbons

Robert Gibbons provides a thorough discussion of game theory for practicing economists.

Paper: $24.95 ISBN 0-691-00395-5

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS
AVAILABLE AT FINE BOOKSTORES OR DIRECTLY FROM THE PUBLISHER: 609-883-1759

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

writing skills, and he remembers that Hill came to class one night looking upset. During the break he asked her what was wrong, and she replied, "Clarence is doing real wild stuff. I don't want to talk about it." When Mims pressed, Hill revealed that she and Thomas had gone out to lunch earlier in the day, and during the meal, Thomas had begun saying "really crazy stuff to her—talking wild."

When Mims's account is added to the accounts of Hoerchner, Carr and Wells, it seems a powerful corroboration of the claim that Hill told friends at the time that Thomas was talking about pornography to her over lunch. Mayer and Abramson also do an effective job of rehabilitating Hoerchner against the attacks of Senate Republicans and David Brock. Brock's central thesis—that Hill told Hoerchner that she had been harassed by an earlier boss, rather than Thomas, and then failed to clear up the false impression—is undermined by the fact that Hill told Mims, Carr and Wells that she was being harassed by Thomas; and they remember noting how ironic it was that she was being harassed by the head of the EEOC.

The basis of Brock's implausible thesis is that Hoerchner originally told FBI investigators that Hill had been harassed in the spring of 1981, several months before she first started working for Thomas. The obvious explanation, that Hoerchner got the date wrong in recollecting a conversation that took place a decade ago, is confirmed by her statements to the FBI that she had a terrible memory for dates and was making a "wild guess." Danforth nevertheless reveals that Justice Thomas himself has embraced Brock's thesis. "Clarence's memory of the matter, which he says is vague, is that he hired Hill because his friend Gil Hardy, a partner at Wald Harkrader, told Thomas that Hill wasn't getting good assignments because a partner wanted to have a personal relationship with her outside the office," writes Danforth:

> Clarence remains convinced that if Anita Hill was sexually harassed, it was prior to her employment at the Department of Education or EEOC. He believes that the initial story of Susan Hoerchner is significant because it places the time of Hill's claimed harassment as being before she went to work at DOE in August, 1981, when she was employed by Wald Harkrader.

This shows a really cavalier attitude toward facts on Thomas's part. There is absolutely no contemporaneous evidence that Hill ever claimed to have been sexually harassed at Wald Harkrader. And regardless of her reasons for leaving the law firm, it is hard to believe that Hill would have told four different friends in 1982 and 1983 that she was being harassed by Thomas, and feigned the distress that each of them observed right after the relevant encounters with Thomas occurred.

On the strength of her four corroborating witnesses alone, Hill's allegations seem pretty convincing. Mayer and Abramson also usefully note the similarities between the affidavits of Anita Hill and Angela Wright, the "other woman" who wanted, but was not permitted, to testify. Wright talked to congressional investigators before she heard Hill's testimony, and emphasized that Thomas had an odd way of asking her on dates: "Clarence Thomas would say to me, 'You know you need to be dating me—I think I'm going to date you—you're one of the finest women I have on my staff. You know we're going to be going out eventually.' " Anita Hill described a similarly peremptory form of courtship: "You ought to go out with me." Neither of these advances is especially illicit or shocking; but the linguistic similarities tend to undermine Thomas's claim that he never asked out anyone on the staff.

As Thomas himself argued during the hearings, "If I had used this kind of grotesque language with one person, it would seem to me that there would be ... other individuals who heard bits and pieces of it, or various levels of it." Thus Mayer and Abramson seem on solid ground when they interview two other EEOC aides, including Thomas's former chief deputy, who recall that they heard Thomas had used the phrase "Who has put pubic hair on my Coke?" in the early '80s. (Both were so startled that they told their spouses.) Still, the aides cannot remember for sure whether they heard the phrase directly, or heard about it from colleagues, which makes their recollections vulnerable as hearsay.

The great value of Mayer and Abramson's book, in the end, is not their scoops or their revelations; it is the calm thoroughness with which they collect a great deal of information about the motives of Thomas and Hill and arrange it into a plausible, psychologically complex narrative. Hill's ambivalence about testifying, and the oddly passive-aggressive way in which she allowed her charges to trickle out, and her peculiar decision to maintain contact with Thomas even after he purportedly humiliated her—all of this becomes intelligible in the course of Mayer and Abramson's account. And the competing theories of the Thomas partisans tend to collapse in the cool light of their reporting. Orrin Hatch, for example, maintained that Anita Hill was coached by interest groups to make her story more vivid. But Mayer and Abramson have discovered that all of the most vivid details of Hill's allegations—the pubic hair and so forth—appeared in the contemporaneous notes of James Brudney, a staffer for Howard Metzenbaum, during his first telephone conversation with Hill, weeks before she met any interest groups.

But when Mayer and Abramson move beyond interviews with Thomas's coworkers and colleagues and begin to sift through his private magazine collections and video rentals, their book becomes a little cheap. Of course, evidence that Thomas had a lifelong habit of watching pornographic movies, and talking graphically about them among friends, is not exactly irrelevant to corroborating Hill's charges. Thomas also seems to have been interestingly two-faced on the subject of pornography, and hypocrisy always invites some kind of exposure. Brock, for example, quotes Armstrong Williams's account of how Thomas sanctimoniously railed at him for buying an issue of *Playboy*.

> Are you crazy? They exploited this girl. They used her. How can you buy that trash and take it up to the agency and show it to people?... You're beyond that. You're above that. You must learn to do better. And plus, it reflects on me and the agency. Throw that in the trash can.

Contrast this with the testimony of Kay Savage, an EEOC employee who told congressional investigators that when she visited Thomas's efficiency apartment in 1982, all of the walls were covered with *Playboy* centerfolds. The magazines, Thomas told her poignantly, were his one recreational vice, and the only possessions that he thought worth salvaging from his collapsing marriage.

The marginal relevance of the pin-up story notwithstanding, there is something distasteful about the tongue-clucking prudery with which Savage discussed her discovery with Mayer and Abramson, and then repeated it on national television. This was the man's *bedroom* she was spying on, after all. There is something even more distasteful about the way in which Mayer and Abramson apologize primly for their descent into Brockism ("An interest in pornography might ordinarily be considered a private matter ...") and then milk it for all it's worth. The passages that they have chosen to highlight in *The Wall Street Journal*, and in their

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

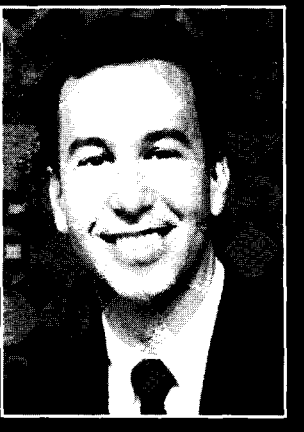
breathy press kit and television promotions, are inevitably the dirty bits, including testimony from Thomas's college friends about his weakness for scatological talk, and an interview with a local video store owner who said that Thomas was a regular consumer of adult videos in the 1980s.

Mayer and Abramson are investigative journalists, not judges; but many judges would exclude evidence of Thomas's private reading habits under rule 403 of the federal rules of evidence, which says that evidence should be excluded when its probative value is outweighed by its prejudicial effect. In the same spirit, many judges would exclude trumped up evidence of Hill's sexual history, such as the infamous "pube affidavit," where several former law students at Oral Roberts University swore that she had put pubic hairs in their exam booklets. Even Bush administration officials, according to Danforth, found this absurd; and Danforth now regrets the unhinged ruthlessness with which he tried to discredit Hill, without showing any concern about fairness or evidence.

Clarence Thomas railed at the Judiciary Committee and the media for depriving him of ordinary procedural protections. "There are no procedures. There are no safeguards. There are no protections. There is no way to test the validity of statements, the accuracy of statements, the reliability of statements. There are no rules of evidence," he complained to Danforth. But in fact, Senator Joseph Biden, as well as *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, had evidence of Thomas's taste in videos, and prudently decided to keep it under wraps. "I could have brought in the pornography stuff," Biden told Mayer and Abramson. "I could have decimated [Thomas] with that. I could have raised it with more legitimacy than what the Republicans were doing." Biden acted, he concluded, "in fairness to Thomas, which, in retrospect, he didn't deserve." Never mind the second thoughts. The circumspection of Biden and the newspaper editors is one of the few examples of good judgment in the sordid drama.

After finishing Mayer and Abramson's narrative, it is hard to escape the conclusion that Clarence Thomas lied to Congress when he categorically denied all of Hill's accusations. But it is also hard to share Mayer and Abramson's confidence that Hill was a courageous victim, and that her allegations, if proven true, would have constituted "unlawful sexual harassment" that, independently of the perjury, should have

LEADERSHIP WITHOUT EASY ANSWERS



Ronald A. Heifetz

"Heifetz presents a new theory of leadership for both public and private leaders in tackling complex contemporary problems. . . An innovative and thoroughgoing work."
Jane Kathman, *Library Journal*

"Nothing is so practical as good theory. [This book] is a delight for theorists and a gold mine for practitioners!"
William Ury, coauthor with Roger Fisher, *Getting to Yes*

"Remarkably thoughtful, provocative, and useful. This book will be seen as a major contribution that provides a rare interdisciplinary view of leadership in context."
General Walter Ulmer, President and CEO, Center for Creative Leadership

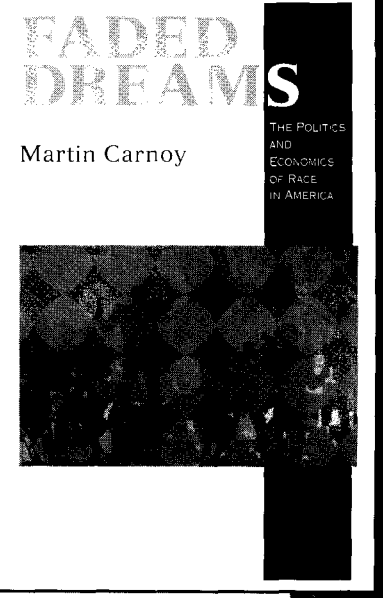
"Original and penetrating in its analysis of leadership. This is an excellent book."
John Gardner, former Secretary HEW, Founder, Common Cause

"In a field in which there has been a great deal of repetitious work, Heifetz strikes out in ground-breaking directions."
James MacGregor Burns, author of *Leadership*

Belknap Press, $24.95 cloth. At bookstores or from
Harvard University Press
Order toll-free: 800 448 2242

Challenging the bell curve...

FADED DREAMS
The Politics and Economics of Race in America
Martin Carnoy
"... specific and compelling evidence about patterns of racially based economic injustice, and explains why it persists in America. Professor Carnoy makes a solid case that the government must intervene more to resolve these problems."
– Congressman John Conyers, Jr.
(1st Congressional District, Michigan)



0-521-47062-5 Hardback $29.95
Available at Bookstores everywhere.
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

disqualified Thomas from the Supreme Court. During the hearings, of course, Thomas himself enthusiastically agreed that Hill's charges, if true, would have constituted illegal sexual harassment; but what else was the man to say with the cameras pointed at him? A more sober review of the evidence suggests that Anita Hill was remarkably passive and irresponsible in giving Thomas little clue that his behavior distressed her.

Hill was far more ambitious, Mayer and Abramson observe, than she indicated to Congress; and in her eagerness to remain in Thomas's good graces, she failed to make clear that his lurching advances were "unwelcome"—which is the keystone of a legal sexual harassment claim. At times Hill's passivity verged on comedy. When Thomas boasted, for example, about his sexual prowess, Hill never indicated that she was upset. Instead, she blandly suggested, in her best Sunday School manner, that "everyone is interested in different things." Even Hill's corroborating witnesses felt that Hill was partly responsible for her misunderstanding with Thomas. When Bradley Mims asked Hill why she didn't get another job, Hill's reaction was anguished and somewhat calculating. She was young, liked her work, she knew Thomas was going places, she wanted to ride his coattails.

Mayer and Abramson acknowledge that many people could not understand why Hill would stay in touch with a man who had harassed her. She made the contacts seem more mysterious, first by denying them and then by claiming that most of her attempts to reach Thomas had been at the request of other people. But her opaqueness left Thomas with little idea of how she regarded him. Thus, when she finally accused him, he was by all accounts genuinely stunned. The fact that Hill remained silent for so many years, and continued to let Thomas visit her at home after the alleged harassment had begun, undermines her claim that his lurching advances added up to harassment: in a harassment case in 1986, the plaintiff's claim was rejected because she visited her alleged harasser at the hospital and at his brother's home, and allowed him to come into her house alone at night after the alleged harassment occurred. None of this justifies Thomas's blanket denials, of course; but during the hearings even Hill herself acknowledged that there were differences of opinion about whether or not she had experienced the equivalent of actionable harassment. A little more sensitivity to the murkiness of the legal case against Thomas might make Mayer and Abramson's portrait more balanced and compelling.

Clarence Thomas has been a justice of the Supreme Court for the past three years. What can these two books teach us about his judicial philosophy and performance? Abramson and Mayer devote only four of their 400 pages to a cursory discussion of Thomas's opinions; and instead of original analysis, they quote conservative pundits who dismiss him as "basically in Scalia's pocket" and civil rights leaders who dismiss him as the "house Negro." Danforth praises Thomas, just as superficially, as a partisan of judicial restraint, which he defines as "the idea that a judge should apply the law and not use the Court to further his or her own philosophical cause."

To say that "Scalia has two votes" does not do Thomas justice. Thomas and Scalia often vote together, and some of Thomas's ghostwritten opinions do read like parodies of Scalia opinions, but Thomas's own voice—radical, angry, interestingly perverse—has emerged clearly in important cases. He seems to relish taking positions that are, legally, just beyond the pale, for the sole purpose of sticking it to his familiar opponents—the liberals, the interest groups, Congress. At the same time, Thomas's radicalism frees him to take some principled stands on questions where other justices aren't willing to pick a fight. His opinions, in short, have the manic energy of the Federalist Society officers on No-Dōz who actually draft them; and for this reason they are more entertaining to read, and sometimes more rigorous, than the work of more conventional justices.

On the in-your-face point, Mayer, Abramson and Danforth provide some useful background. At Holy Cross, one of Thomas's college classmates recalled, there were always four views on any issue: the left, the right, the center and Thomas. In Danforth's book, similarly, Thomas himself explains how he struggled to conceal his confrontational impulses before the Judiciary Committee:

> I think the process forces the nominee to jump through hoops ... and so you've got to be bland.... You've got to round the edges out. It zaps you not of core honesty, but it zaps you of the fire in the belly.... You have to take their pounding. You have to play sort of rope-a-dope.... You have to lay back and you have to take more than you normally would take. You have to avoid being confrontational. You have to avoid showing passion. You have to be thoughtful or you have to appear to be thoughtful. You can't have any ideas....

And what were the ideas that Thomas struggled to keep under wraps? The focus of his anger has changed over the years. He has exchanged one political persona for another, just as he exchanged his work boots at Holy Cross for pinstripes at the EEOC. In college, he raged against "the man" and the system. "I had become drunk with anger," he recalled in a speech at Holy Cross last February. "I had become addicted to being a victim of oppression, and I was angry that whites controlled the fate of blacks.... I was angry for all oppression and injustice, not mine personally." As a Republican bureaucrat, he raged against Congress and praised Oliver North. (In an unintentionally hilarious passage, Danforth describes how Justice Department aide Michael Luttig, now a federal appellate judge, tried to help Thomas explain away his Congress-bashing speeches: "Now Judge, you said that Congress is a bunch of buffoons and clowns. What do you mean by that?") By the end of the hearings, of course, Thomas's rage had broadened into a visceral contempt for all liberals who had wronged him: "I felt abused. I felt that they had wronged me. I felt that they had hurt me. They had hurt my family. They'd hurt my friends for political ends. I felt that God wanted me to tell the country that this wasn't right."

Justice Thomas's various anxieties and obsessions—a desire to get back at Congress, defiant assertions about the injustice of assuming that all blacks think alike, and a readiness to unsettle decades of precedent—converged in his remarkable voting rights concurrence in *Holder* v. *Hall* last June. As a policy argument, his observations about the tendency of the Voting Rights Act to segregate voters along racial lines are provocative. He criticizes the entire premise of "vote dilution" claims: the notion that when the voting preferences of black voters are consistently defeated by racially polarized voting, the appropriate remedy is to create majority black voting districts. Thomas objects to the offensive premise that "race defines political interest" and that "members of racial and ethnic groups must all think alike on important matters of public policy and must have their own 'minority preferred' representatives holding seats in elected bodies if they are to be considered represented at all."

In fact, the Voting Rights Act does not really permit legislators to assume, based on lazy stereotypes, that blacks and whites all think and vote alike. The Court has said repeatedly that whether a racial group is "politically cohesive" must be empirically demonstrated in each case. Indeed, race-conscious districting is per-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mitted as a remedy under the Voting Rights Act only in areas where the evidence demonstrates conclusively that blacks and whites actually do vote in polarized blocks. Thomas objects that the Court has not said precisely how high the correlation between block voting and race must be to trigger the Voting Rights Act; but the solution to this would surely be to establish a higher standard of proof, rather than to refuse to enforce the Voting Rights Act in all circumstances.

In any event, if Thomas's concerns about race-conscious districting were addressed to Congress, or published on an op-ed page, they would deserve to be taken seriously. But Thomas is not content to make a policy argument. Instead, he goes on to offer, in his concurrence, a plainly implausible view of the Voting Rights Act, claiming that Congress never intended it to cover claims of vote dilution at all. This is absurd as a matter of statutory interpretation. For the past twenty-five years, since the *Allen* decision in 1969, the Court has taken it for granted that the claims of vote dilution could be litigated under the Voting Rights Act. The *Allen* decision may have been open to question when it first came down; but Congress has re-enacted the Voting Rights Act three times since 1969, and at no point has it ever suggested that the decision was wrong.

Moreover, the whole purpose of the 1982 amendments to the Voting Rights Act was to repudiate the 1980 *Mobile* case, where four members of the Court had taken the position that Thomas is now attempting to resurrect. In rejecting the views of the *Mobile* plurality, Congress explicitly directed courts to consider whether "based on the totality of circumstances, a state practice results in members of a minority group 'hav[ing] less opportunity than other members of the electorate to participate in the political process and to elect representatives of their choice.' " The Senate report that accompanied the 1982 amendments contains ninety-two references to vote dilution. It is only by willfully misreading the statutory language, by ignoring the legislative history and by overturning twenty-five years of judicial precedent, congressional expectations and settled practice that Thomas can reach his preferred result.

The most surprising feature of Thomas's opinion is that it is based, ultimately, on pragmatism rather than principle. Thomas concedes, in the end, that Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act could "be read to apply to claims of vote dilution," but he refuses to carry out what Congress clearly intended because, in the course of evaluating a vote dilution claim, "a court would have to embark on [an] extended project in political theory"—speculating, based on empirical evidence, what an "undiluted" vote would look like, how many representatives a non-polarized voting district would elect and so forth. Again, as a policy matter, Thomas is convincing when he argues that courts are ill-equipped to make these sorts of subjective judgments. But Congress, for better or worse, has delegated these judgments to the courts; and for Thomas to refuse to obey Congress's instructions because of his own ambivalence about the wisdom of the delegation is an especially brazen act from a judge who claims to "apply the law, not make it." The voting rights decision shows, therefore, that rather than criticizing Thomas's opinions for being heartless and cruel, liberal commentators would do better to focus on the ways in which they are formally unconvincing and methodologically unrestrained.

At the end of *Resurrection*, Danforth quotes Psalm 30 and compares Thomas to Christ in the tomb: "Clarence had risen. Alleluia!" The analogy, however, seems premature. A less self-pitying justice might have begun to recover from the trauma of his hearings by now, overcoming his anger and forgiving his enemies. He might have called for healing in a magnanimous speech, and he might have taken his job seriously enough to ask a question or two at oral argument, rather than lapsing into a sullen and contemptuous silence. But from what we now know of Thomas's personality, this kind of largeness of spirit seems to be beyond his reach. When Thomas quoted Marion Barry at a meeting with black journalists a few weeks ago—"I'm going to be here for forty years; for those who don't like it, get over it"—he was projecting his own inability to transcend his obsession onto his startled visitors.

In a moving passage in *Resurrection*, Clarence Thomas reflects about what he has learned from his ordeal:

> It showed me just how vulnerable I am.... It showed me how vulnerable any individual is.... It also showed me ... that 2 percent or 1 percent or 0.2 percent can always be used to destroy a human being when there are no barriers, when there is no perspective and no context.

If this is a grudging confession, then perhaps Thomas deserves a grudging absolution. As punishment for a clumsy advance, and an impetuous denial, Thomas has been stripped of all dignity and reduced to a quivering fetal crouch. Nothing in these books suggests that he is likely to get up very soon. •

POETRY: The Unsayable Said

Poetry is talk altered into art,
speech slowed down and
attended to, words arranged
for the reader who contracts
to read them for their whole heft
of association and noise.
DONALD HALL

Send for
a free copy of
Poetry: The Unsayable Said,
a chapbook by Donald Hall,
published by Copper Canyon
Press in support of
our national campaign
aimed at increasing
the visibility of poetry
throughout
our culture.

COPPER CANYON PRESS

P.O. BOX 271
PORT TOWNSEND
WASHINGTON
98368

Major marketing initiatives have been made possible by the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Literary Publishers Marketing Development Program, funded through a grant to the Council of Literary Magazines and Presses.
Calligraphy by Tim Girvin

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Restorer of the Real

BY HELEN VENDLER

The Varieties of Metaphysical Poetry by T. S. Eliot edited and introduced by Ronald Schuchard

(Harcourt Brace & Co., 343 pp., $29.95)

Who is this young man?

> He was a young man of ardent feelings, of an active intellect fascinated by abstractions, and with a remarkable gift for metaphysical emotion. He had a passionate craving for order: that is, that every feeling should have its intellectual equivalent, its philosophical justification, and that every idea should have its emotional equivalent, its sentimental justification.

It may take us a moment to translate, into real life, what this sentence tells us about this young man. "*Every* feeling"—feelings of passion, of hatred, of indignation, of dishonor—"should have its philosophical justification." Most of us experience our feelings without a constant obligation to analyze each one to see its intellectual equivalent and its philosophical justification. This young man is convinced that he must reject any feeling for which he cannot find one or the other of these. Goodbye to sexual desire, if it cannot be philosophically justified. And "*every* idea should have its emotional equivalent": this even stranger absolute requires that no idea should exist in the mind dispassionately. The young man has to love each idea he adopts, as he would love a person he bound himself to; his *éducation sentimentale* is carried on as much by ideas as by affections. The passage continues, with a logic not everyone would follow, "The world which could have satisfied his nature, therefore, was Dante's world."

This young man was T. S. Eliot describing himself under the pretext of describing Jules Laforgue. What is a young man to do who wishes he lived in the *trecento* but finds himself living in the twentieth century? He takes Dante as his model, and the *Vita Nuova* as his manual of sexuality; and he looks in it not only for philosophical justifications that may ratify his feelings, but also for some ideas that he can love. Along the way, he finds out that he is a poet. This troubles him: "The poet in a man does tend to spoil everything else." "A strong bent toward theological and philosophical study, and no direction toward creative activity in these studies, is discernible in [such a person]."

Only too true. There he was, Tom Eliot in graduate school, experiencing a strong bent toward theological and philosophical study (the Buddha, Bradley's *Principles of Logic*), but finding that he was not disposed to become a minister of the Gospel or a professor of philosophy at Harvard. "Creative activity" for him was coming to mean poetry, and the poet in him was about to spoil "everything else" (including his relations with his family) as he absconded from the Ph.D.—though he had only to defend his dissertation to gain the degree—and went off to live in Paris. There, in this crisis of conscience, he read, with passion, the modern French poets who saved his life.

> When I first came across these French poets ... it was a personal enlightenment such as I can hardly communicate. I felt for the first time in contact with a tradition, for the first time, that I had, so to speak, some backing by the dead, and at the same time that I had something to say that might be new and relevant. I doubt whether, without the men I have mentioned—Baudelaire, Corbière, Verlaine, Laforgue, Mallarmé, Rimbaud—I should have been able to write poetry at all.

Of all these poets, the most important to Eliot (though not, as Eliot recognized, the greatest) was Laforgue. In every description that Eliot gives of him, we can read Eliot's own analysis of himself:

> Jules Laforgue ... was among the prophets, who say *Credo*, not among those lost people, who say *Dubito*.... For [him], life was consciously divided into thought and feeling; but his feelings were such as required an intellectual completion, a *beatitude*, and the philosophical systems which he embraced were so much *felt* as to require a sensuous completion.

Woe to the man, we might answer, whose feelings require a *beatitude*. What in this world will satisfy him? No wonder he says *Credo*. And what might the ordinary young women he encounters, as he looks nakedly and hopelessly to them for beatitude, make of him? We return to Eliot's Laforgue:

> He is at once the sentimentalist daydreaming over the *jeune fille* at the piano with her geraniums, and the behaviorist inspecting her reflexes. What he wants, you see, is either a *Vita Nuova* to justify, dignify and integrate his sentiments toward the *jeune fille* in a system of the universe, or else some system of thought which shall keep a place [for and] even enhance these feelings and at the same time enable him to *feel* as intensely the abstract world.

Pauvre jeune fille!

Eliot was so scrupulous that the battle between his analytical modernism and his Calvinist ancestry almost destroyed him.

> [He] is, in a way, part Jesuit and part Calvinist; I venture the suggestion that a profound examination of the doctrines of both sects, and an attempt to entertain both guests on equal terms, might, if it did not kill the experimenter, throw some light on [his] mind.

Who is this young man? He is Donne, as the young man of my first quotation was Laforgue; but who can doubt that once again Eliot is talking about himself, both as Donne—riven between the Counter-Reformation "psychologism" of the Jesuits and the medieval "ontologism" of the Calvinists—and, as the investigator of Donne, almost destroyed by the intensity of his identification with the poet?

I have been quoting from the two sets of unpublished lectures by Eliot recently edited and magisterially annotated by Ronald Schuchard of Emory University. These are the Clark Lectures, delivered at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1926, and the Turnbull Lectures, delivered at Johns Hopkins in 1933. Though the Turnbull Lectures are clearly derived from the Clark Lectures, Schuchard rightly says that they are

> much more than a rushed reduction of the Clark Lectures.... Eliot seemed to relax among the transcriptions into some of his most personal moments of expository writing ... [about] literary criticism, ... nineteenth-century French poets, ... the place of private emotion and subjectivity in poetry, ... the function of the poet, the ultimate value of his work, the nature of greatness in poetry.

These lectures, though they remained unpublished in their original form, were repeatedly cannibalized by Eliot for subsequent essays, and many of their seminal ideas—from the decline of culture since the thirteenth century to a consequent "dissociation of sensibility" (as intellect detached itself from emotion)—made their way rapidly into critical discourse. Eliot's writings were always so fertile in suggestion that cultural critics, religious writers, poets and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

professors all mined them as sources of provocative obiter dicta. The personal origins of Eliot's remarks—a legal separation from his wife and his imminent conversion—remained obscure to most of his readers.

As Schuchard points out, Eliot "raided" the Clark Lectures for his six broadcasts on seventeenth-century poetry for the BBC (published in the BBC journal *The Listener* in 1930), and also for his "Note on Two Odes of Cowley" (1938). And portions of the lectures appeared in French translation (reprinted by Schuchard) in 1927. In their present form, finally published in full, the lectures are not so much introducing new ideas as allowing us to see Eliot's workshop, since he wrote the lectures hurriedly, in France, quoting his texts from memory. Schuchard has tracked down the many texts quoted or alluded to, and has given a brief account of them, and has corrected Eliot's haphazardness of reference. He has also, very valuably, pointed out remarks made elsewhere by Eliot that corroborate, expand or complicate the remarks made in the Clark and Turnbull Lectures. All of the more expansive notes are interesting, but for me the most useful are the ones in which Eliot's attitudes toward modern verse are made explicit. The lectures, after all, are Eliot's poetic manifesto. They defend his own poetic practice as he saw it after the publication of *Prufrock and Other Poems* (1917), and *The Waste Land* (1922).

It is clear that Eliot found himself helpless before his own nature. He saw in himself a dissociated sensibility, plunged into a time almost wholly uncongenial. He was unable any longer to compose poetry in traditional ways, yet found himself reacting in what one can only call aesthetic disgust to various modernist practices that, to an unalert eye, might seem to resemble his own. The personifications used by Edith Sitwell, for instance, seemed to him factitious. In 1920, Schuchard's note tells us, he had found in her "a poetry of perversity": "The paraphernalia of verse are the instruments of her disdain.... With her 'the fat leaves pat the shrinking air' and 'the candles weep and pry like living things.' "

The poet who had written about the fog rubbing its back upon the window panes is incensed at the apparent resemblance of Sitwell's verse to his own. It is very hard to explain to someone not attuned to poetry the sort of emotional incoherence that lies behind Sitwell's phrases—how she has chosen the verb "pat" to go with "fat" (or vice versa) without imagining any logically insertable human relation in which something fat pats something shrinking; how she has failed to suggest a human drama in which some nameless "living thing" could be weeping and prying at once in ways that would resemble any conceivable activities of a candle. An undemanding reader would see the same "shock value" in Eliot and in Sitwell.

The surreal Eliot of *The Waste Land* is equally affronted by the more cavalier sort of French surrealism. In 1920 Eliot wrote, as we know from another note of Schuchard's, that Tristan Tzara's verse represents:

> the reductio ad absurdum of ... the tendency of people of intelligence who have thought about art to the point of having become cynical about it, and of people who follow them without having thought about it at all.... It is wholly unconstructive. It is, in the end, unscientific. It is no more art than a postage stamp album.

Once again, we can see, through Schuchard's acute annotation, the poet of the emotionally coherent collage of *The Waste Land* furious at the emotionally incoherent, but apparently similar, collage of Dada. Because of Schuchard's inclusion of notes such as these, the contemporary reader of the Clark Lectures will gain a far more informative sense of what was at stake for Eliot in dealing with the emotional incoherence of Cowley or the fragmented imagery of Crashaw. How to be fragmentary without falling into fragments: that was the question.

Can anyone nowadays endorse Eliot's version of the fall of poetry into modernity? And if not, do these lectures lose their value if one rejects their theological nostalgia and their uneasiness with the increasing power of science? Now that seventy years lie between us and the Eliot of these essays, we must see them, I think, as yet another retelling of the Schillerian story of naïve and sentimental poetry: once upon a time, the poet looked directly at the world and wrote about it with an admirable objectivity, but with the fall into introspection, objects became colored with the sentiments of the observing mind, and poetry became a portrait of the soul rather than of the thing. Matthew Arnold, Eliot's chief model of criticism, had retold this story himself, as had John Ruskin; and behind the story, as the nineteenth century framed it, was the fear of the connection between modern sentiment and the feminine, not to speak of the homosexual. Eliot himself voices this fear in the Clark Lectures:

THE ETHICS OF CULTURE

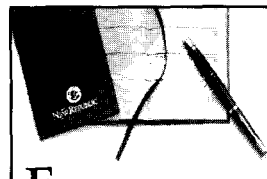
Samuel Fleischacker

Explores episodes of moral crisis from Hitler's Holocaust to Khomeini's death sentence on Salman Rushdie and demonstrates the major role that culture must now play in ethics.

"Full of ideas, engagingly written, strikingly original."
—John Kekes, author of *Facing Evil* and *The Morality of Pluralism*

$29.95 cloth At bookstores
or to charge call (607) 277-2211

Cornell
UNIVERSITY PRESS
Sage House • 512 East State Street
Ithaca NY 14850



ANNOUNCING
THE NEW
REPUBLIC
1993 POCKET
DIARY

For the past few years, we have been giving pocket diaries, embossed in gold with The New Republic name and logo, to our writers and editors and special friends in the media. The diaries have been so popular that we have decided to make them available to our subscribers at a low cost, only $10.95 each.

The diaries are made by Letts of London. Each Diary includes weekly calendars with space to write down daily appointments, plus a wine vintage chart, a list of important toll-free telephone numbers, and addresses, and more.

The pages are edged in gilt and carry a silken page marker. The diary itself is dark blue with featherweight light-blue pages.

It's elegant and easy to use. The cost to non-subscribers is $12.95, but we're offering it to subscribers for just $10.95, *including* postage.

YES, Send me the New Republic pocket diary immediately. (Please allow 2 to 4 weeks for delivery.)

❑ I am a subscriber, $10.95
❑ I am not a subscriber, $12.95

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State ___ Zip _____

Write to: Pocket Diary, The New Republic,
1220 19th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036

Check or Money-Order must accompany each order

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> In much English prose, even the finest, of the nineteenth century, I find more than a trace of intellectual psychologism, and just the faintest, undefinable perfume of femininity. I find it in Newman and Francis Bradley as well as in Ruskin and Pater.

Newman became a Roman Catholic priest vowed to celibacy; Bradley never married; Ruskin was divorced because of impotence and never remarried; Pater remained an Oxford bachelor. In his fear that he might be one of this group, Eliot sought external buttresses for his own tremulous inner life—the buttress of Aquinian theology (less accommodating than Newman's ever-developing dogma); the buttress of a sinewy intellectuality like Donne's (less feminine than Crashaw's, more integrated than Cowley's); the buttress of woman (using the theologically reassuring model of the *Vita Nuova*, in which the *jeune fille* is a path to the divine).

I do not mean, by guessing at the motives behind Eliot's choice of writers for these lectures, to diminish their literary worth. On the contrary; owing to the interior importance of these writers to Eliot's own life and work, he had intense and moving things to say about them. Eliot was impelled to write on the "metaphysical" poets by George Santayana's *Three Philosophical Poets*, who were Lucretius, Dante and Goethe. In spite of his admiration for Santayana ("The town of Avila near Madrid has two glories: that of having given birth to St. Theresa and that of having given birth to Mr. George Santayana of Cambridge, Massachusetts"), Eliot wanted to "proceed from the side of poetry, not from the side of philosophy," restricting the label of philosophical poetry to "poetic work of the first intensity, work in which the thought is so to speak *fused* into poetry at a very high temperature." Dante, Donne and Laforgue would be Eliot's chief examples of this admirable poetry, and he would place them among their contemporaries so as to exhibit their superior possession of this quality. In short, Eliot made judgments of taste first, and only then proceeded to questions of philosophical "fusion." (Santayana had made judgments of content first—"Which poets write from complete philosophical systems?"—and then proceeded to choose good authors.)

The principle of the superior interest of the better poet is the one that guides Eliot's critical work. He knows that a critic pursuing religious themes will be interested in anyone who wrote about God, and that Donne and Crashaw will equally be grist to that critic's mill. But Eliot recognizes that Donne is a better poet than Crashaw; and that for a working poet like himself, the better poet is the more intriguing one. How does a given poet make himself better than his contemporaries? For, as Eliot had written in 1923 (as revealed in another of Schuchard's notes), "conceits which seem to us to fail are formed by exactly the same method as the conceits which seem to us to succeed."

It is not method in itself, then, that distinguishes Donne from Crashaw; and by this deduction Eliot is forced into a consideration of that emotional and intellectual coherence that he found in Donne and that he deplored the lack of in Sitwell and Tzara. One can read these lectures as a long investigation, on the part of the greatest inventive genius of twentieth-century poetry, of the hope that the senses, the emotions and the intellect could conspire to create a poetry that is not a disgrace to any of these faculties. The demands that Eliot put on himself—and on poetry—were very high. And the cost of that internal demand was also high—since it involved analyzing the *jeune fille* even as one admired her, and asking whether sexual passion was a place to lay one's bets:

> For passion, unless it be of an astounding simplicity and ingenuity, or, unless it be sustained by a high philosophy which interprets it into something else, must always fade out. In Donne it fades into the play of suggested ideas: and Donne is the great ruler of that borderland of fading and change. It is only one more step in metaphysical poetry to the conscious irony of conflict between feeling, and the intellectual interpretation that feeling wishes to give itself, and reason.

It was that ironic conflict between reason and feeling that Eliot recognized in Laforgue (the third of his metaphysical poets, following Dante and Donne) and in himself. "We also, provided with no philosophy which can assign a serious and dignified place to the original impulse [of passion], take refuge in the anticlimax of ratiocination." Laforgue's "devouring intensity" was like Eliot's own; and he claimed for Laforgue "a masculine toughness and a keen ironic sense of humour" that distinguished him from those more effeminate souls like Pater and Newman. "His critical intelligence was incapable of drugging itself with emotion," says Eliot, in his most ominous sentence with respect to emotional commitment (however promising it may be with respect to art). Other poets—Yeats, for instance—have seen the poet's life as an alternation between the drug of emotion and the alertness of creativity. No passional drug worked for Eliot: he remained, during his years as a powerful poet, in the same position as Laforgue: *"Moi, je ne vais pas à l'église;/Moi, je suis le Grand Chancelier de l'Analyse."* After Eliot wrote these lectures, he began to frequent *l'église* as a baptized adult, and the temperature of his poetry cooled. Laforgue's irony, as Eliot said, was "always employed against himself." Irony always employed against himself is the mark of Eliot's pre-conversion poetry; it persists, but only faintly, in the religiously earnest poetry of his latter years.

These lectures contain, in their moments of practical criticism, unrevised observations that are full of Eliot's feline spirit.

> [Cowley] fails to make the Word Flesh, though he often makes it Bones.

> You cannot live on a high plane and indulge yourself in verbiage.

> The human mind, when it comes to a terminus, hastens to look up the next train for almost anywhere.

Servants' Day Off

Far off a lighthouse,
small and white as a saltshaker.
You can smell the sea air's salt.

But in a lane of bayberries
she breathes the scent of candles.
Already the water is tarnished.

And tomorrow there will be errands;
her long-plumed duster will flit across
a marble angel's forehead.

Now two broad wings sweep toward her
like a silent, feathered wave—
one tip nearly touching her face

before swirling off into darkness...
An owl. She catches her breath
as if kissed below stairs.

Then stone-faced she strides
down the path of white sand
that ends at a rear-entrance door.

ERIC MATHERN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

[Donne was] a voluptuary of thought, as St. Theresa and St. John of the Cross were voluptuaries of religion.

[In Crashaw] you have emotion piled on emotion, as a man drinks when he is afraid of becoming sober.

[Cowley is] a pathetic little celibate epicurean,... yet ... there was some pluck in the temper of this little college mouse who spied for the royal cause.

Is this [Ignatian meditation] not a spiritual haschisch?

These are amusing and even shocking comments. But there are truer remarks, like the one on Marvell's "The Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Fawn": the poet "takes a slight affair, the feeling of a girl for her pet, and gives it a connection with that inexhaustible and terrible nebula of emotion which surrounds all our exact and practical passions and mingles with them." No one could have written of "that inexhaustible and terrible nebula of emotion" without having suffered from it all his life. "Real irony," as Eliot remarks, "is an expression of suffering, and the greatest ironist was the one who suffered the most—Swift."

Many of Eliot's brisk remarks about poetry should be revived. "Poems ... are living things capable of and intended to give enjoyment"—but how often, these days, are they taught as such? And when Eliot considers what the poet's work in culture is, he is worth hearing:

> At they represent phase of the world's process,... the poet or the novelist, even if he does not make such claim himself, is acclaimed or censured for his contribution to "thought," to what belongs to metaphysics, theology or psychology.... On the one hand it is supposed that the function of the poet is merely to amuse or to thrill; on the other he is expected to provide a gospel for the multitude struggling toward the light. Both views are wrong.

The first view turns art into frivolity; the second turns it into religion. Eliot rightly sees that the function of the poet is "transposing into poetry the thought of the time which he selects as important to him." Quite other aspects of contemporary thought might be important to someone else—poetry is not intended as a universal gospel. And the poet *transposes* that thought into poetry; the musical metaphor is significant, implying as it does that the thought is not philosophically transformed, but is rendered in a different key, the key that "emotionalizes" the idea and intellectualizes the feelings. The new key does this by means of its specialized use of language.

For Eliot, the literary critic is one who can speak of that new key:

> The ideal literary critic should have both an intense concentration and an indefinite awareness. He should not be primarily concerned with sociology, or with psychology, or with polities, or with theology, or with any other ology; he should be primarily concerned with the word and the incantation.

He continues, "I see no reason why sociologists should not scrutinize poetry, or why psychologists should not analyze it; but this is not literary criticism."

It is not because Eliot holds a narrowly technical view of poetry that he so defines literary criticism. On the contrary, his view of the effect of poetry could not be a more moral and social and philosophical one:

> The poet's first purpose is to amuse, and unless he can amuse, all else is vain; but he speaks in parables.... The artist is the only genuine and profound revolutionist, in the following sense. The world always has, and always will, tend to substitute appearance for reality. The artist, being always alone, being heterodox when everyone else is orthodox, is the perpetual upsetter of conventional values, the restorer of the real.... His function is to bring back humanity to the real.

Is the literary critic aware of these high effects of poetry? Yes, but he is interested in their literary causes. "Now the critic," says Eliot, "has to be aware of all this, but to stick to his job," which is to be primarily concerned with "the question whether the poet has used the right word in the right place, the rightness depending upon both the explicit intention and an indefinite radiation of sound and sense." In short, the literary critic is the one who gives the poet credit not for the chancy, fickle and unpredictable reader responses of amusement or inspiration, but for the work of putting the right word in the right place. How does the critic recognize that work? By possessing the same care for language as that highly specialized technician, the poet. Such a care for language is in short supply among sociologically and psychologically minded critics.

The poet, in short, wants to be praised for the accomplishments of his own peculiar and distinctive talent—not to reform thought, but to reform expression:

> The important poets will be those who have taught the people speech; and the people had in every generation to be taught to speak: the function of the poet at every moment is to make the inarticulate folk articulate; and as the inarticulate folk is almost always mumbling the speech, become jargon, of its ancestors or of its newspaper editors, the new language is never learnt without a certain resistance, even resentment.... This purification of language is not so much a progress, as it is a perpetual return to the real.

Remarks of this sort have gained Eliot a reputation for snobbery; but nobody has ever felt it snobbish to say that without Euclid "the people" would not have arrived by themselves at geometry, or that without Einstein "the folk" would not have deduced relativity. The truth of the matter is that there appear, recurrently, people whose achievement in their culture is simply astonishing, each of them bringing to perfection one of humanity's talents. There is no snobbery in saying that the highest achievements in articulacy, like the highest ones in music or mathematics, are produced by very few, and those few highly trained; and there is in fact nothing more unlike snobbery than saying that the "inarticu-

A Perfect Gift for

Word Lovers

VEX® is a deluxe word game for two players or teams, crafted in Vermont. VEX includes a fine wooden gameboard and case, 107 wooden letter tiles, a soft, 100% cotton, burgundy letter bag, and wooden score pegs. Attractive, *addictive*, VEX will delight true word lovers! Order VEX as a gift for someone special ...or treat yourself! *Gifts can be shipped direct.*

$49.95. **1-800-789-GAME**

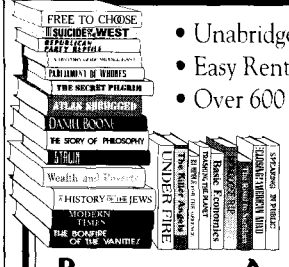
VEX is a registered trademark of Wood-on-Brook Games

GOOD VIBRATIONS

Friendly, informative catalogs of sex toys, books & videos. $4, applied toward first order.

1210 Valencia #NR, San Francisco, CA 94110

AUDIO BOOKS



- Unabridged Recordings
- Easy Rentals by Mail
- Over 600 Great Titles

"I go through a book a week using time otherwise wasted in taxis, shaving or walking" —George F. Will

BLACKSTONE AUDIO BOOKS

Dept. NE • P.O. Box 969 • Ashland OR 97520

For a FREE Catalogue, Write or Call:

1-800-729-2665

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

late folk" are entirely capable of learning a new language, of being restored to the real, by each exposure of outworn jargon as exhausted and inexpressive. The real snobs are those who would, in the name of the people, deny to the people the very education that the geniuses of the world—Eliot among them, as these lectures remind us—have to offer.

HELEN VENDLER has three books on poetry forthcoming from Harvard University Press: *Soul Says: Recent Poetry*; *The Given and the Made: Lowell, Berryman, Dove, Graham*; and *The Breaking of Style: Hopkins, Heaney, Graham*.

Unsentimental Education

BY NATHAN GLAZER

City on a Hill: Testing the American Dream at City College by James Traub

(Addison-Wesley, 371 pp., $25)

James Traub spent a year at the City College of New York, now part of CUNY, or the City University of New York, one of those huge conglomerates of public higher education that have sprouted since World War II. Traub sat in on many classes, some of which he seems to have attended regularly, spoke with many students, interviewed teachers and administrators and placed all this in the setting of the unique history of City College. He has written a thoughtful and balanced book that quite transcends the level of the normal reporting on the school.

There has been a good deal of such reporting on City College in recent years. One reason for the attention has been the saga of Professor Leonard Jeffries, who has created a private bailiwick in the black studies department of the college in which his ugly and outlandish doctrines have become the norm, and who, despite the absence of any academic accomplishment, has been able to preserve his redoubt for two decades. Initially this was thanks to the pusillanimity of City College administrators. After they were finally induced, by a public outcry against a speech in which Jeffries attacked Jews as major participants in the slave trade, to slap him on the wrist (his most recent three-year term as chairman, a post he has held since the beginning of the department, was reduced to one year), he sued in federal court on the ground that his right to free speech had been infringed.

He was restored to the chairmanship and given damages, to the mystification of all who are unaware of the lengths to which the interpretation of protected free speech can extend. Since any further action against him on the grounds of free speech is enjoined, and since action initiated on different grounds—he has published nothing and teaches his students nonsense—could be attacked as motivated really by his anti-Semitic speech, he apparently has permanent control of the department. (The battle is not over, though: the recent Supreme Court decision to order an appeals court review of the Jeffries case may yet alter the boundaries of free speech in the academy.)

This has not contributed, of course, to City College's reputation. Traub published an excellent article on Jeffries in *The New Yorker*, and has a chapter about him in his new book ("Dr. J's Theater of Racial Outrage"); but this is a small part of the book, and a sideshow to the main story. The more important reason for the publicity that City College receives is the serious questions that have been raised about the effectiveness of its policies of open enrollment, initiated after major student disturbances in 1969 and driven by New York City's racial politics.

Those policies, which grant admission to the four-year colleges of CUNY (which include such well-known institutions as Hunter, Brooklyn, Queens and Baruch) to graduates in the top half of their high school classes (this was later reduced to the top third) and to many students below this standard who are poor and need remedial education, have led to the admission of great numbers of unqualified and unprepared students. Have these policies destroyed a unique institution of higher education? Heather MacDonald recently made this case in *City Journal* and in *The New York Times*, which led to a flurry of responses, for and against. One of those writing in defense of the institution was General Colin Powell, a graduate of the college in the days before open enrollment when it was a highly selective institution.

There is a historical reason that the fate of City College will arouse more interest than somewhat similar developments at San Francisco State, or Cleveland State, or many other public city colleges that have undergone transformations in the character of their student enrollment. City College was rather more important than other city colleges in other parts of the country that drew their students from the less prosperous part of the urban population. No public institution of such modest resources has graduated so many people who became part of this country's elite of scholars, scientists, intellectuals and opinion-makers.

Its role in the city, as a supplier (along with its fellow city colleges) of teachers, accountants, lawyers, doctors, dentists, professors and psychotherapists, was enormous. It was a no-tuition institution created in 1847 for the "laboring class." While it was open to any New Yorker who qualified, regardless of income, it happened that those with the requisite resources preferred New York University or Columbia in New York City, or Yale, Harvard and similar elite institutions outside the city. City College and its story are inevitably intertwined with the great domestic themes of American history: the economic and social rise of immigrant populations, the fate of the black minority, the prospects for integration into American life of the growing new immigrant populations of Hispanics and Asians. It was a major engine for the rapid transformation of American Jews from a community of workers and small shopkeepers to one of the most prosperous and influential segments of American society. A judgment of City College is, in effect, a judgment of how well the American experiment is working.

Traub's report, it should be said immediately, is not uniformly gloomy. The contemporary City College, to sum up a complex story, can be divided into three parts. There is, first, the huge remedial enterprise that engrosses much of its resources. This consists of basic classes in writing, reading, "college skills," social studies and mathematics for students who seem almost entirely devoid of normal academic skills, even though they may have graduated in the top third of their high school classes. This is the part of City College that seems, from Traub's account, almost beyond hope. The students suffer from

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more than academic deficiencies: many work, many have children, many come from troubled backgrounds. For many students, the college is the only aspect of relative normality in their lives, a kind of refuge to which they escape from terrible neighborhoods and difficult personal circumstances. But success—defined as the ability to move successfully through the many remedial levels into the regular college—is rare.

Next there is the more promising part of the remedial effort. This is the program that tries to teach English to those who do not know the language:

> Three or four hundred of City's 1,100 or so entering freshmen now begin their career in the ESL [English as a Second Language] program. They are sorted into three levels, which together offer six courses. Students who begin at the bottom of the ESL ladder typically take two years to emerge into the regular curriculum. The dropout rate is harrowing. As of a few years ago, two-thirds of ESL students were leaving City before completing the freshman composition course that follows the ESL sequence. But given the magnitude of the problems its students confront, the ESL department is a relatively optimistic place.

More than half the students of City College are now foreign-born, most from non-English-speaking countries. Traub emphasizes the difference between those who have gone through the city's public high schools, many of whom are native-born Americans, and those who have been educated in a foreign country. Wherever that education was acquired—in Latin America, the Caribbean, the eastern Mediterranean, Eastern Europe—these students are better. Their English may be nonexistent, but it does show improvement over a year, and they are motivated and hard-working and know what academic work is, something of which the normal New York City school graduate seems innocent.

And then there is still the college itself, the real college. There is, first, the engineering school. "Engineering Separates the Men from the Boys" is the title of the chapter in which Traub describes the engineering students. The students here work all the time, have excellent facilities and an excellent faculty, disdain the other students and create or maintain a culture that is distinctive. Engineering students had no time for radical politics, for which the College was famous, when I went to City College in the 1940s; and now they have no time for Professor Jeffries's antics. On a recent visit to City College, I was overwhelmed at the size and the modernity of Steinman Hall, where the engineering school is housed. It offers probably ten times the space available to engineering students when I attended City College. There were handwritten notices up asking for a tutor in Boolean algebra, which was apparently essential for a certain course. That looks serious.

But there is more than engineering that is serious at City College. Traub describes a class in literary theory taught by Carla Cappetti,

> an authority on modern critical theory, a field that a number of her colleagues considered self-indulgent left-wing twaddle. Her course outline included such headings as "Linguistics, Formalism, Semiotics: Language and Parole, Synchrony and Diachrony, Signified and Signifier." ... She assigned impenetrable authors—Benjamin, Bakhtin, Propp, Barthes, Derrida, Lacan.... For the best students in the department, who had breezed effortlessly through most of their classes, the course had the appeal of Mount Everest. Cappetti refused to compromise the difficulty of the material, no matter how much the students moaned....

He describes another class, taught by Juliet Floyd, who has come to City's philosophy department from Harvard, on Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. Both courses impress him with the quality of the teachers and the commitment of the students to master difficult material.

I find more impressive than the presence of such courses given by good teachers the fact that Floyd also teaches the required core course in philosophy. Few colleges, I would hazard, have a required course in philosophy. This course is taken by third- or fourth-year students, which means, as Traub points out, that they are survivors. Few who enter get that far. Not many teachers have the opportunity to compare students at today's City College with students at Harvard. Floyd does, and comments that "the top third has a lot of potential. The best of them are as verbally polished as the middle third of students at Harvard. And there's a higher level of motivation...." Of the bottom third, she says: "Different schools have different tails.... Wellesley, for example, has no tail. City College has a *major* long tail. And what you see in this group is heartbreaking. They have been tricked by the system into believing that they can do what in fact they can't do."

Which brings us back to the key question that this book raises. How do we conceive of the remedial enterprise? Is it simply a political response—expensive, pointless—to the demand that City College "look more like New York"? Is it a necessity, in a city more than half black and Hispanic, and whatever its failures a program that must be continued if the city is to hope for a sizable middle class and a competent labor force? Is it a noble effort built on the misguided premise that anyone is capable of becoming a college student? Floyd says, "The faculty is completely divided between those who say, 'Everyone is educable, the school is great,' and those who say, 'The place has fallen apart, standards have gone to hell.' "

There are no encouraging statistics on the open enrollment story, whatever the occasional individual successes. "In the late 1960s," Traub writes, "between three-quarters and four-fifths of [City College] students graduated, generally in four years." Those are graduation rates typical of elite liberal arts colleges, not public colleges. "But after four years only one-third of the class of 1970 [the first open enrollment class] had graduated; only a half remained in school. A 1981 study put the graduation rate for black open admissions students at 22 percent, and at 19 percent for Puerto Rican students." It seems to have continued downhill since. Heather MacDonald, in *City Journal*, presents a table of five-year graduation rates for the entering classes of CUNY senior colleges of 1980: it was 15 percent for City College. Graduation rates are notoriously difficult to interpret for an institution like City College today, in which students drop in and out, and transfer in and out; and this rate does seem too low for an institution that admits 1,100 freshmen a year and graduates 1,200 students. But whatever the statistics, City College is clearly very different from the institution that once admitted a class of uniformly teenaged and qualified students, who rarely diverged from the path of four years of continuous college education leading to a bachelor's degree.

We learn from Traub how enormously difficult it is to make up for what seems to be a disastrous education in New York City's public schools. Of course there are still very good high schools in New York City, but their graduates typically do not go to City College. They go to the institutions of the State University of New York, they go to private colleges and universities, they go out of state; and if they go to CUNY, they will be more frequently found in other senior colleges of the CUNY system, in Queens, Brooklyn and Hunter. It is City College's misfortune to be located in "Harlem," as the area around it is called. This was not Harlem when I attended City College. In those ancient days,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

You deserve a factual look at...

Syria and the Peace Process
Is it a partner that Israel should trust?

In order to promote the Middle East peace process, President Clinton recently extended the signal honor of a state visit to President Hafez Assad of Syria. Our president's hope to wring any "concessions" out of Mr. Assad were unfulfilled. We must ask ourselves whether "Syria is a reliable partner in any peace agreement and whether Israel, from which many "concessions for peace" are being asked, would be wise to entrust its security to Syrian promises.

What are the facts?

A Rogue Country and a Rogue President. Syria is an outlaw country and is classified as a "terrorist state" by the United States. Terror is the most pervasive aspect of the Syrian regime. Much of that terror is conducted through "clients", such as the terrorist bands of the PLO, the infamous Hamas, and the Iran-sponsored Hizbullah, to all of which Syria extends protection and warm hospitality. Syria's most ruthless terror, however, is reserved for its internal opposition. In 1982, President Assad put down a rebellion in the town of Hama, in which he killed 20,000 people.

More cunning even than his Iraqi counterpart, President Saddam Hussein, he shares with him utter ruthlessness, disregard of human life and above all an abiding hatred of the West, which means primarily the "big-devil", the United States and the "little devil", Israel, the perceived outpost of Western culture, of Western democratic concepts, and of "American imperialism" in the Middle East.

Main sources of Syria's revenue are the large-scale and officially conducted narcotics trade, and massive counterfeiting of American currency. Few doubt that Mr. Assad personally authorized the suicide attack on the Marine barracks in Beirut in which 241 Americans lost their lives and in the blowing up of Pan Am Flight #103, in which 270 people died. Even today, Assad gives hospitality to surviving thugs of the Nazi regime, outstanding among them Alois Bruner, Eichman's deputy and main slaughterer. The terror in Israeli cities could not possibly occur if President Assad were to forbid it.

The Obsession with the Golan. Since the founding of Israel in 1948, Syria has attacked it three times, by surprise and without provocation. In the Six-Day War of 1967, Syria suffered a decisive defeat and lost the Golan Heights, a Queens-sized plateau. Israel has been in possession ever since. The Golan is of vital strategic importance to Israel because it makes a Syrian attack against Israel virtually impossible. On the Golan, Israel is protected by sophisticated electronic surveillance and warning systems and by one of the deepest and most formidable obstacle systems in the world. The Golan is desolate and serves no real purpose, except as a defense post for Israel or as an attack-launching pad for Syria. Syria is obsessed with the Golan and has stated over and over again that it will not make peace with Israel unless and until the Golan is handed back in its entirety. But if such an exchange—the Golan Heights for peace—should come about, Israel's continued existence or destruction would depend on the good will of the Syrian dictator or his successor. It's a risk that Israel should not be asked to assume.

> "For Israel to survive, the Golan must stay in Israeli hands. The Golan is the price the Syrians must pay for their aggressions. All things considered, it's a small price."

The conflict between Syria and other Arabs with Israel is not about land—it is about Israel's very existence. No other country in the world would be expected to yield indispensable strategic ground to those who are sworn to destroy it. One may ask why Israeli leaders, among them experienced generals, would wish to consider such a gamble. But leaders do make fatal errors in judgment. We only need to remember British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, who in his quest for peace agreed to the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia and thus brought about the Second World War. Considering that Syria is a rogue country with a rogue president, Israel should not make its survival dependent on Syria's "goodwill". Yes, there must be concessions. But, for Israel to survive, the Golan must stay in Israeli hands. The Golan is the price the Syrians must pay for their aggressions. All things considered, it's a small price.

This ad has been published and paid for by

FLAME

Facts and Logic about the Middle East

P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco,CA 94159

FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit 501(c)(3)organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national newspapers and magazines. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and for related direct mail.

Yes, I want to help in the publication of these ads and in clarifying the situation in the Middle East. I include my tax-deductible contribution in the amount of

$ _____ NR 50

☐ My contribution is in the amount of $50 or more. Please send me your booklet containing 24 of the ads that you have published in national media over the last few years.

My name is _____

I live at _____

In _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to FLAME P.O. Box 590359 San Francisco, CA 94159

Harlem began below the heights on which City College was located, and the neighborhood around it was rather better than those from which most of the students came. But the geographical area denoted by the term "Harlem" spreads with the expansion of the black and Hispanic population. Many students understandably prefer Hunter on the East Side in Bloomingdale country, or Queens, which is practically in suburbia, or other senior colleges.

Remediation, for the great number of City College students who need it, turns out to be far more difficult than anyone envisaged. A few years ago Robert De Niro and Jane Fonda appeared in a movie in which the illiterate De Niro is taught how to read by Fonda. At about that time I visited a literacy program in the South Bronx. The director was upset by the movie: it did not help him in his work, he said, since it made the task of learning to read, if one was an adult who had not learned how, look much too easy. In the real world, literacy is not an accomplishment of a few months.

One discovers from Traub's account how hard it is to bring New York City high school graduates to the level that any college should require. The issue is not only decoding written material or writing grammatically (hard as that is for students who do not read). There is also the issue of stance, attitude, a critical and analytical response to written materials. Traub is very good at communicating this difference. In a freshman composition class (which comes after all the remedial reading and writing classes), a teacher tries to get the students to respond to a piece of writing by a classmate about his relationship to his mother. They offer sympathetic and obtuse comments: "If you're happy, that's all that counts." Or, "She'll come around." Or, "I raised three in the '60s, and it was hard times." "Few understood writing," Traub writes, "as a form, a thing external to themselves...." How does one teach that? If Traub had gone into the math remediation classes, he undoubtedly would have discovered equivalent levels of necessary abstraction and complexity that the students found difficult to surmount.

The problem of City College is that New York City's public high schools do not graduate any significant number of minority students who both qualify for college education (let alone elite college education) and who would want to go to City College. This has been true for a long time. In 1968, the year before the strike and the disturbances that led to open enrollment, a black professor

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of political science at City College named Allan Ballard counted the number of graduates at some dominantly black and Puerto Rican public high schools who could qualify for City College under its then-existent standards; at Benjamin Franklin in East Harlem (Daniel Patrick Moynihan's high school) it was eleven out of 318; at Boys High School in Brooklyn, it was seven out of 353.

A story a year ago in *The New York Times* about the first graduate of James Monroe High School in the Bronx to attend Harvard reported that only three of its graduates held Regents diplomas. These are based on academic statewide examinations, and the Regents diploma was the norm in this working-class high school when I graduated from it in 1940. In those years, hundreds of graduates from such high schools qualified for admission to City and other public colleges, and few of them thought of going anywhere else (or had the opportunity or resources to do so). We confront in New York a collapse of public high school education in low-income minority areas whose causes are still beyond us. (The areas were just as poor or poorer when their high schools were uniformly graduating huge numbers, many qualified for the city colleges.)

Had City College stuck to its standards, it might anyway have undergone a transition, if a slower one, from white to black and Hispanic. Perhaps the city needed only to be patient. But other things were happening that would have made this an unlikely outcome. Elite colleges all over the country, private and public, began searching for promising minority students in the late 1960s. Many programs to support such students were launched by foundations. If Harvard wanted 10 percent of its students to be black, what chance was there these students would go to City College? In any case, in the political atmosphere of 1969, with annual summer riots in the cities, with Mayor Lindsay in office, it was impossible to stand against the demand that the City Colleges, which were free and maintained at great expense by the city, should be more representative of its population.

Was there any alternative? The public higher education system of California maintains an elite university with many campuses, for which only the top eighth of graduating high school seniors are eligible, a state college system for the top 50 percent, a host of community colleges for the rest. This model has been the salvation, perhaps, of the University of California, but it could not be replicated at a moment's notice in New York City. There were only the senior four-year colleges, and the community colleges, and there was no intermediate group of institutions that could take the pressure off the four-year colleges. They had to undergo the trauma of open enrollment. The institutional arrangement that could have saved them did not exist.

Could the remedial education of this host of uneducated and ill-educated students have been managed better? One thing that must impress the observer of this transformation was the creativity that remedial education called forth from people who never intended to do such work. Mina Shaughnessy became a hero of remedial writing education. Her *Errors and Expectations*, a book on an inherently uninteresting topic, is a fascinating account of the problems that beset beginning adult writers, and how their writing can be improved. Shaughnessy and City College recruited a remarkable body of teachers. Unfortunately, the financial crisis of 1976 meant that the resources that were required for her approach—small classes, dedicated teachers—could not be maintained. Nor is it clear that matters would have been very different if the financial crisis had not cut into the resources available for remedial work. Remedial education, even the best kind, can only do so much.

"The high schools should be doing this!" This became the cry of the harried professors of City College, who had never expected to teach illiterates. But the high schools weren't doing it. Twenty-five years later, they still aren't doing it. And the high schools would have insisted that the junior high schools should have been doing it, and the junior high schools would have faulted the product of the elementary schools, and everybody would have pointed to disastrous neighborhoods and broken families. New York City's population had changed from a largely stable working class in which fathers worked or looked for work, mothers stayed home, children came home for lunch or took sandwiches from home (there were no lunchrooms in schools, let alone free lunches), accepted the authority of teachers and assumed one had to be smart and work hard to go to college, to something very different.

City College, too, changed in this environment. One can think of ingenious arrangements that might have preserved an elite institution, but I doubt they would have worked. City College was not, in its glory days, distinguished by its resources or its curriculum; its curriculum, in fact, looks better to me today, and I have the impression that its teachers have improved since the 1940s in almost every field. City College was what it was because of its students, and those students reflected a different world. Now the students have changed because the city has changed, and because the society has changed. It has not been a change to which many institutions have successfully adapted. James Traub has written a really remarkable book on this dilemma, and the fate of City College as it has tried to deal with it.

NATHAN GLAZER, a graduate of City College's class of 1944, is professor emeritus of education and sociology at Harvard University and the author most recently of *The Limits of Social Policy* (Harvard University Press).

Classical Music Lovers' Exchange®
Nationwide link between unattached music lovers.
1-800-233-CMLS
Box 31, Pelham, N.Y. 10803

An excellent aid for teaching students about other cultures of the world, other peoples of the world, global awareness, the relationships of one culture to another, our own western cultures and those of third world or developing countries.

The World Calendar includes:
- National, civic and religious holidays of more than 100 countries
- Each weekday, month, holiday, and photo caption in six languages - English, French, German, Spanish, Japanese, and Arabic
- Illustrated with photos that reflect the diversity of world cultures
- An index to help you understand and teach celebration days throughout the world
- International time zone map
- Holidays of the world's major religions: Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim, and Hindu

The World Calendar provides:
- A helpful aid in teaching and learning about other cultures
- An instructional aid that can be used everyday
- An excellent bulletin board item to be used in setting the scene for cultural awareness

World Calendar - TNR
c/o Educational Extension Systems
P.O. Box 259, Clarks Summit, PA 18411 - **Toll Free 1-800-447-8561**
☐ Please send me (1) calendar at $11.75 plus $3.00 postage ($14.75)
☐ For two or more calendars. Please send _____ calendars at $11.75 + $2.00 postage each ($13.75 each)
☐ Check or Purchase Order enclosed
☐ Charge my credit card ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard
Card No. _____ Exp. Date _____
Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WASHINGTON DIARIST

Play it again, Chris

If I may borrow the famous Humphrey Bogart line, this conference could be the beginning of a beautiful friendship.
—Warren Christopher, opening address to the 1,200 delegates of the Casablanca conference on Arab-Israeli economic cooperation, October 30

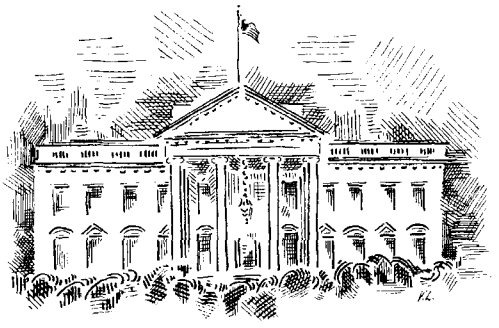
THEY SAID THAT BECOMING SECretary of state had changed Chris. But you wouldn't know it seeing him sitting alone at the bar of the Casablanca Intercontinental, brooding, chain-smoking, nursing his scotch, mumbling "Here's looking at you kid" to no one in particular. He had the air of a man who had seen too much, the hard edge of a man who had once dispatched a friend, dragged away to execution, with a pitiless "I stick my neck out for nobody"—yet whose upper lip began to tremble whenever the piano player struck up "As Time Goes By." *That* Chris.

HE HAD A LOOK OF MENACE NOT seen in your average corporate lawyer. But, then again, Chris was no longer your average corporate lawyer. He was secretary of state. And a damned good one, too. A secretary of state who would just as soon pull a gun on you as give you the time of day. Who'd stick a finger in your eye and make you like it.

MANY OF THE DELEGATES WONdered how a face so puckered and pinched could hide such steely cool. They had heard about Christopher's legendary self-containment, his taste for the unconventional, his disdain for the most ordinary social decencies. Yet even they were unnerved to hear him answer the Sarajevan delegate's desperate plea for American assistance with "Want my advice? Go back to Bulgaria." ("Bosnia," whispered Strobe Talbott.) At the full plenary, no less.

DAY AFTER DAY, IN ONE MULTIlateral caucus after another, nothing could crack the remorseless exterior of the man with the striped pants and impossible eyebrows. Many tried. His suite (right over the bar) was a magnet for every dame with ambassadorial rank and a world-class sob story. Everyone wanted a piece of Chris. Some tried charm. Some tried flattery. Some tried Chardonnay. Nothing worked. When Yvonne, the pert young Algerian delegate, pleaded with him for a forthright American statement supporting her beleaguered government, Chris first tried saying President Clinton would never approve. When she persisted, he cut her short: "Yvonne, I love you—but he pays me."

YET THROUGH THAT AIR OF BRUtal indifference came flashes of the romantic who had so long ago electrified Casablanca's café set. At the subcommittee on offshore resource recovery, where a trio of Gulf delegates quarreled bitterly over oil rights, even the Bengali stenographer found herself moved by Chris's stirring admonition that "the problems of three little people don't amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world." Indeed, Christopher's prophetic and oddly personal warning that unless they acted with dispatch and reason "you'll regret it, maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but soon and for the rest of your life" left the sheiks near tears.



THIS WAS CHRIS, THE OLD CHRIS, the one who ran guns to the rebels in Ethiopia, who had fought for the loyalists in Spain, as Louis Renault, the former police captain and leader of the French delegation, never tired of telling the younger delegates.

YET EVEN LOUIS, WHO KNEW HIM so well, was unprepared for Chris's pained reaction to the surprise midsession appearance of Hanan Ashrawi, who hushed the conference hall with her stunning entrance, mysterious and dazzling as ever in her white linen suit and trademark wide-brimmed fedora. "Of all the gin joints in all the towns in all the world, she walks into mine," muttered Chris to an uncomprehending Mauritanian who noted with puzzlement the absence of liquor in the hall.

THERE HAD LONG BEEN RUMORS about Hanan and Chris and Paris. But not one of the Maghreb old-timers could remember Chris reacting that way to anything. Indeed Major Strasser, the German delegate who had served with Kurt Waldheim during World War II, flatly declared the rumors false and offered as proof the fact that they had failed to surface in even *The New York Post* during Chris's confirmation hearings.

SUCH WERE THE MYSTERIES ABOUT Chris, a shadowy past that kept delegates talking long into sessions on upper Jordan aquifer allocation rights. Finally, the junior trade minister from Eritrea, an ex-guerrilla still unlearned in the niceties of diplomatic chat, confronted Chris with the question that had been puzzling so many of his colleagues: Why was Christopher spending so much time in Damascus and now in Casablanca and so rarely returning home? "Why don't you go back to America?" he asked point blank. "Did you abscond with the church funds? Did you run off with a senator's wife? I'd like to think you killed a man."

CHRISTOPHER HAD LONG ACknowledged that his 1990 Columbus Day speech, "Challenge of Today: Interdependence or Coexistence," had left an audience member dead of catatonic stupefaction. But Chris had stoutly maintained that the man suffered from a pre-existing condition. He took offense at the Eritrean's imputation. He turned away.

AND RAN RIGHT INTO LOUIS. THE old Frenchman persisted. "Why *did* you come to Casablanca?" he asked.

"My health. I came to Casablanca for the waters."

"The waters? What waters? We're in the desert."

"I was misinformed."

CHRIS DIDN'T CRACK A SMILE. BUT Sasha did. Sasha the waiter, now State's top Russian adviser. Sasha, who'd seen Hanan and Yvonne and all the others come and go. He gave a sigh of satisfaction at this sudden reminder of the old Chris, the Chris of deadpan wit and effortless repartee, the Chris many feared lost forever during his long climb to international mediocrity, now alive once again in Casablanca.

CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How to Cut Red Tape

Government must work better. The question is: How?

In New York City they tried an experiment. They let city tree workers devise their own routes, schedules and crews. No more arbitrary management decisions. No more days cleaning gutters for friends of higher ups.

The result: city tree workers -- freed up to streamline their work -- cut almost twice as much wood for the dollar as the private companies under contract with the city. Compared to what the contractors charged, the city workers saved taxpayers more than $100,000 in just 40 days.

There's a lesson in this for government. It's a lesson successful corporations have learned. At companies like Saturn and Xerox, front-line workers participate in product development, management decisions and quality improvement. Consumers get better products. The company makes money. Workers get respect. Everyone wins.

Government can do the same. There's no magic to it. Simply treat front-line workers as resources. Let them make decisions on the job. Train them for more responsibility. And cut out those unnecessary layers of bureaucracy and management. Taxpayers save money. Services improve. Everyone wins.

Smarter government, better public services, more efficient use of our tax dollars. Sometimes all it takes is going out on a limb.

PHOTO BY ROBERT GLICK

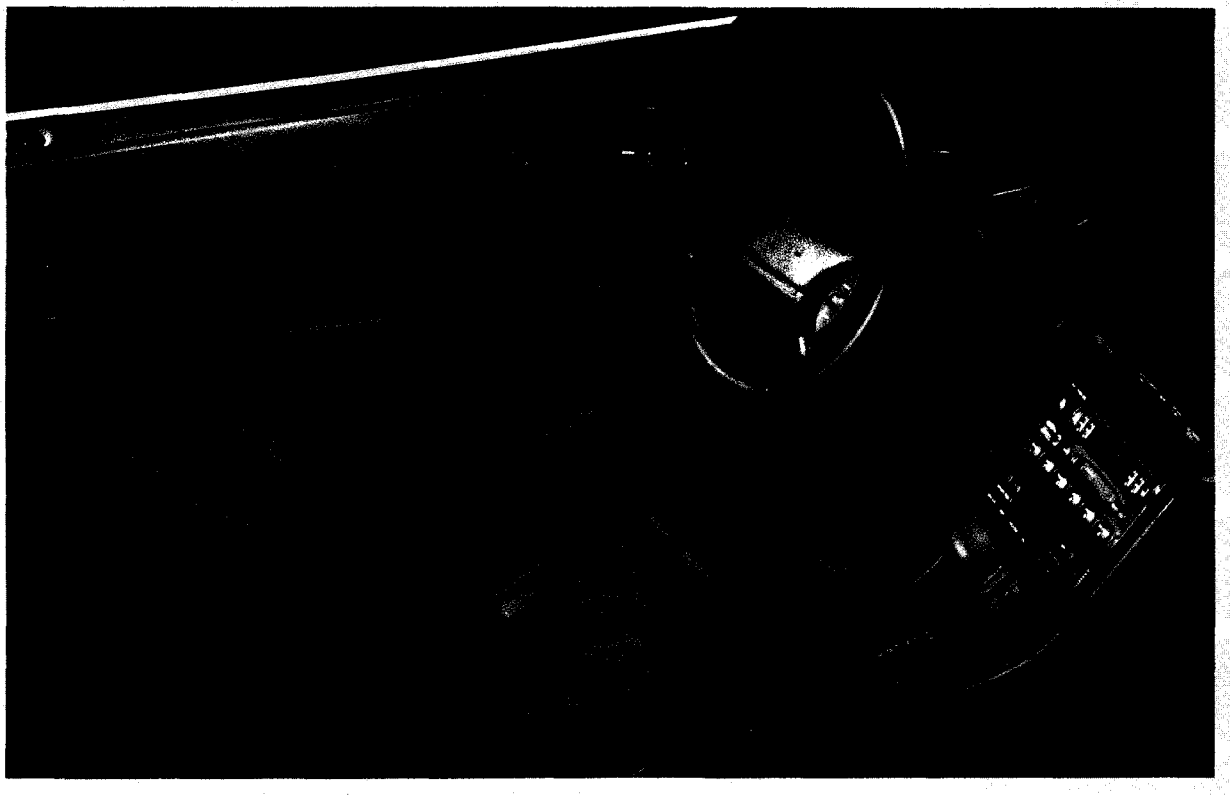
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
PARTNERS FOR CHANGE

AFSCME®
in the public service

American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO
For more information on how to redesign government and improve public services, call 1-800-634-0409

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

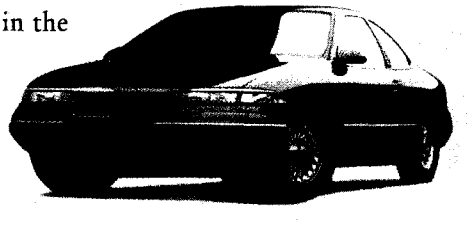
Center For The Performing Arts.



The 280-Horsepower Lincoln Mark VIII

That's where you'll experience, firsthand, the power and exhilaration of Mark VIII's 32-valve Four Cam V-8 InTech™ System.* And all the amenities you could wish for in a luxury sports coupe. Including a sweeping interior that virtually wraps itself around you. The Mark VIII is also backed by the Lincoln Commitment.SM** For more information, call 1 800 446-8888.

And put yourself in the center of an incomparable performance.



LINCOLN

What A Luxury Car Should Be

LINCOLN-MERCURY DIVISION Ford *Available on models produced after Oct. 17, 1994. See dealer for availability. **A comprehensive owner benefits package including 24-hour Roadside Service Assistance and a complimentary service loaner.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED